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THE CASTLE

OF KNARESBURGH

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*James Russell Lowell Esq.  
from the Author.*

THE  
CASTLE OF KNARESBURGH  
AND  
THE WHITE MARE OF WHITESTONECLIFF



THE  
CASTLE OF KNARESBURGH

*A TALE IN VERSE OF THE CIVIL WAR IN  
YORKSHIRE, 1644*

AND

THE WHITE MARE OF WHITESTONECLIFF.

*A YORKSHIRE LEGEND OF THE FIFTEENTH  
CENTURY*

BY

RICHARD ABBAY, M.A., F.R.A.S.

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LATE FELLOW AND LECTURER OF WADHAM COLLEGE, OXFORD

"In Chenaresburgh are six Carucates."—*Domesday*

nlv

LONDON

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1887

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LOWELL BEQUEST.

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I DEDICATE THIS BOOK  
TO THE REVERED MEMORY OF MY FATHER,  
JANUARY, 1885.

---

My father still—I know not why,  
To me thou didst not wholly die ;  
Though oft I hear on village ways,  
Rude voices hushed to tell thy praise,  
And, ere I speak, the tear will start—  
Thou played'st so well a neighbour's part—  
At memory of darksome days,  
And thy quick help and genial ways ;  
Though round thy grave—our service done,  
Thy friends are gathering one by one,  
The old, the poor—I see them now  
Bareheaded stand, and mutely bow,  
I see them now—'tis all I would,  
They deemed thee wise and truly good ;  
Thou wert, thou art—I know not why,  
To me thou didst not wholly die.  
My father still—though thou hast trod  
Thy long and lonely path to God,  
A fiery path—our watching eyes  
Scarce bore thy parting agonies,  
And many a prayerful sigh arose  
For the swift closing of thy throes,  
And yet no prayer for thee was prayed,  
No cry for mercy uttered  
When thy sweet spirit faintly fled ;  
'Twere wrong, when all thy powers were dim,  
To doubt thy peace and rest in Him,  
Who by thy side had ever gone,  
And through all perils led thee on ;  
For thou wert safe, and hadst no need,  
Or all the world were lost indeed.  
My father still—though thou art gone,  
And I am desolate and lone ;  
For when my spirit silent bleeds

I see thee on the shining meads  
Lost in thy meditative mood,  
Slow pacing o'er the daisied sod,  
And, half-impatient of delay,  
I see thee captured on thy way  
With piteous tales of loss and grief ;  
The glittering tokens of relief,  
The dubious loitering at the place,  
The kindly sadness on thy face,  
I see them all and I am glad,  
And yet I know thy heart was sad.  
And still when in thy chair I sit,  
And firelight shadows round me flit,  
And my full heart its pains must know,  
There come, I know not whence or how,  
Faint and afar like evening chimes,  
The sweet soft sounds of happier times,  
And, issuing low, an undertone  
I recognize as thine alone  
Grows swiftly on my listening ear  
To words articulate and clear,  
And thy full voice sonorous thrills  
And all my charmed spirit fills ;  
For thou hadst made, to thee unknown,  
The great Isaiah's tones thine own,  
And all his blissful promises  
Were thine to rest on in distress.  
Still, still I hear thy wisdom's store,  
" Be ever gentle to the poor,  
Not just alone, their poverty  
Claims reverence from thine and thee ;  
'Tis only justice to their lot  
That all their frailties be forgot.  
Soft pity may such service claim,  
'Tis justice under holier name ;  
'Tis heavenly wisdom's nearest kin,  
To doubt if sin be really sin  
Among the poor "—and I have been  
Among great-thoughted and strange-mannered men,  
Beside the bed of death I've knelt,  
And there thy wisdom most have felt,  
God's justice mercy is, and I  
Have learnt from thee how good men die.



# THE CASTLE OF KNARESBURGH.



## P R E F A C E .

THE most interesting as well as the most important epoch in the Civil War was that which commenced with the arrival of the Scots on the banks of the Ouse, culminated in the battle of Marston Moor, and terminated with the fall of York. The great victory which decided on Marston fields the issue of the war was a yeoman's victory, in which the individual skill or genius of commanders played an insignificant part. Indeed, so little did its leaders rule the strife when once begun, that modern historians have found it impossible to follow with precision the movements of the tide of battle as it ebbed and flowed from one part of the field to another. What, however, was abundantly manifested on every part of the huge chess-board of Marston Moor was the indomitable courage of the race and the honest belief in the goodness of their cause, whether men fought under the banner of the Cavalier prince, or side by side with their hereditary enemies from the North.

"The Castle of Knaresburgh" is an attempt to describe the chief historic incidents of this epoch from the standpoint of the Yorkshire yeoman of two centuries ago. The characters are drawn from the ranks of those to whom the victory was due; and the

scenes are laid chiefly in and about Knaresburgh, a neighbourhood teeming with history and romance. The relief of York and the battle of Marston Moor claim a few words of explanation beyond what is accorded to them in the narrative. The former event, the result of one of the most brilliant pieces of strategy in the Civil War, is left unexplained by all modern writers, notwithstanding that the display of generalship in the movement was more remarkable than any exhibited by the leaders on either side in the great battle of Marston Moor. For, although the united Parliamentarian and Scottish armies besieging York exceeded in numbers the combined forces of Prince Rupert and the garrison, the city was relieved without the loss of a soldier or a beast of burden, and this was done, notwithstanding the important fact that the beleaguering force had been in possession of the ground for six weeks, and was well aware of the purpose for which the Royalist army was being mustered in Lancashire. The key to the success of the effort at relief lay in the position of Knaresburgh as a stronghold in regard to York and the river Ouse. To an army coming from the west to York with a view to its relief three main roads lay open, if the attack was to fall on the most accessible and vulnerable part of the besieging force; the more southerly road by Tadcaster, the west road by Wetherby, and the north-west road by Knaresburgh. Prince Rupert chose none of these, but, having reached Knaresburgh on Sunday afternoon (June 30), and stayed there long enough for the news of his arrival to be carried to the besiegers and induce in them a belief that his attack would be made by the road from Knaresburgh, he marched due north to Boroughbridge, crossed the river early on Monday, and by keeping well to the

east of the Ouse, was able to reach York all but unobserved, early in the afternoon of the same day, the Parliamentary army in the meanwhile having been entirely drawn away to the western side of the river to meet the expected attack from Knaresburgh. York was thus entered from the north instead of from the west or south, and for a time, that is, until Prince Rupert commenced his ill-judged pursuit, in the hope of ending the war at a blow, the Parliamentarians and Scots were *en l'air*.

It is evident that the position of Knaresburgh, as a fortress on one of the main roads leading from the west to York, made it in the eyes of the Scots and Parliamentarians a natural halting-place for Prince Rupert before his attack on the besiegers' lines, whilst its distance from the river Ouse caused it to raise no suspicion in regard to his intended movement by way of Boroughbridge.

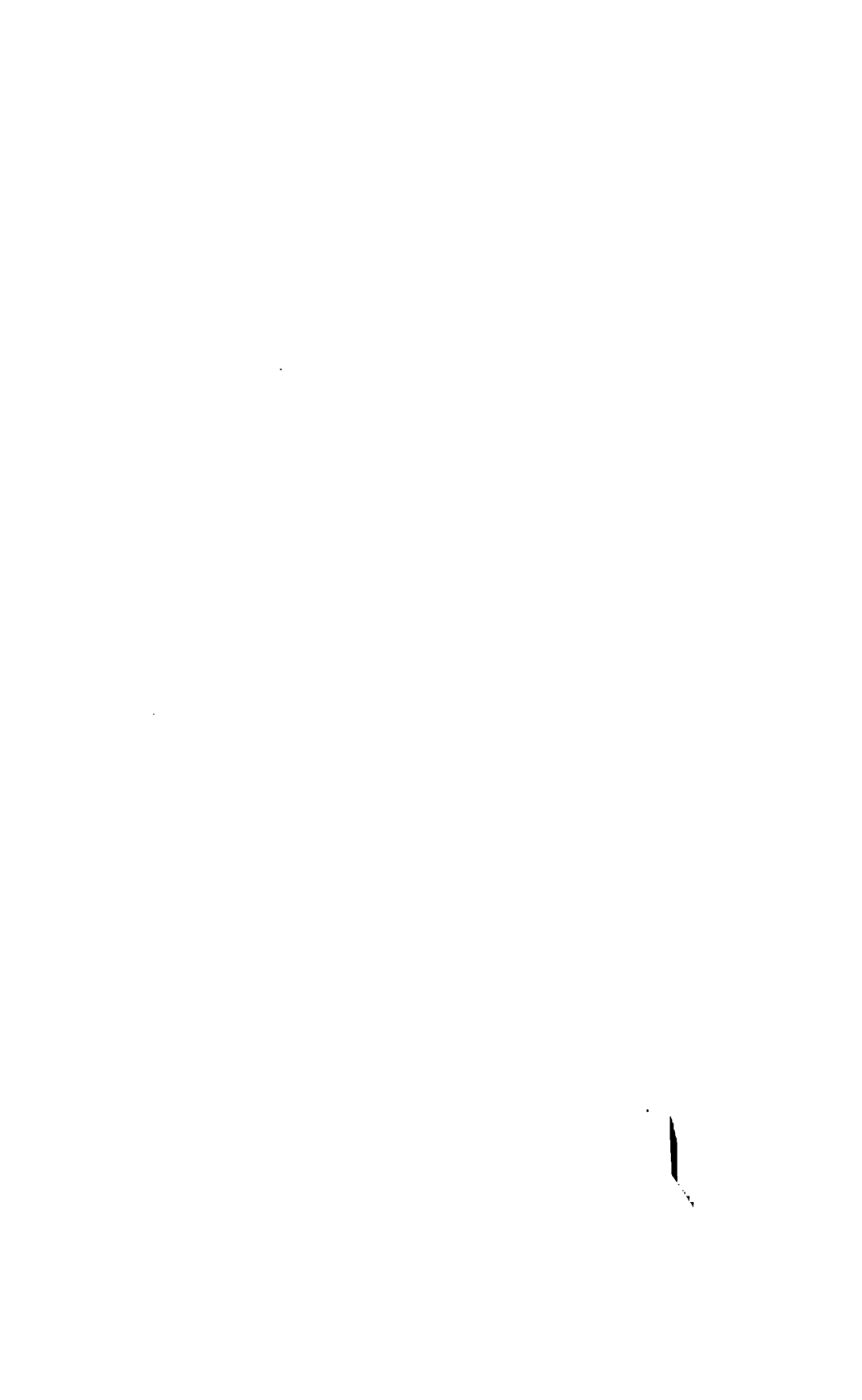
The battle of Marston Moor claims a further word of explanation on account of the alleged enormous disparity in the losses on the two sides. Historians tell us that over four thousand of the Royal troops were slain, whilst the loss of the Parliamentarians and Scots was only three hundred men. That this was so is extremely improbable from the following considerations. The contest was not merely a charge, panic, and disorderly rout, but a hard-fought battle, which was maintained for several hours by nearly fifty thousand of the best men that England and Scotland could produce, with about equal success to either side. No one has ever questioned the military instincts and competence of Prince Rupert's followers, whilst the fact that his opponents were victorious is proof that they were not inferior. It was only in the last hour of daylight that the fate of the battle was decided,

and then the fall of night and the nearness of York prevented the pursuit being as destructive as it otherwise might have been. Further, it must be remembered that as this was the crisis of the war, the Parliamentarians had very strong reasons for minimizing their own losses and exaggerating those of the Royalists; and though, without doubt, some five thousand bodies were counted and buried by the villagers of Marston and Tockwith, the loss or abstraction of the Parliamentary token—a white handkerchief in the helmet—would transform the corpse of a friend into that of a foe, for purposes of enumeration. But, apart from this, we have the evidence of the Earl of Manchester's chaplain, that the bodies of the dead were stripped by the victors during the night, so that when the enumeration and burial began next day, there was absolutely nothing by which to distinguish a Royalist from a Parliamentarian, unless it were the position in which he fell on the outskirts of the battle. The Rev. Simon Ash writes: "That night we kept the field, when the bodies of the dead were stripped. In the morning there was a mortifying object to behold, when the naked bodies of thousands lay upon the ground, and many not altogether dead. The white, smooth skins of many dead bodies gives us occasion to think that they were gentlemen." It is therefore most improbable that such a battle as that of Marston Moor should have been fought by men of the English race with so trivial a loss to the victors as is reported. Indeed, the evidence, apart from the statements of the villagers who buried the naked bodies, leads to the conclusion that the Parliamentarians and Scots suffered only less heavily in killed and wounded than the Royalists.

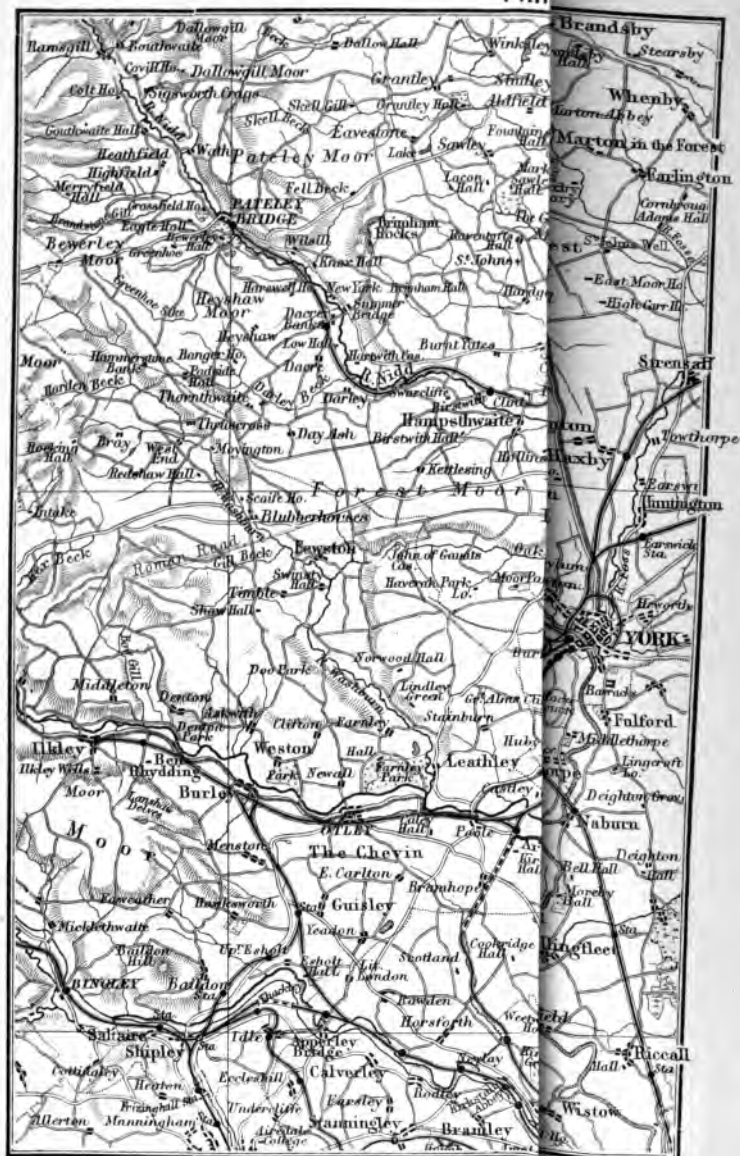
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# THE CASTLE OF KNARESBURGH.

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## CHAPTER I.

### THE FRINGE OF CIVIL WAR—NIDDERDALE.

'Tis May-time in the vale below,  
And softly sweet the breezes blow,  
And fair and fresh the meadows gleam  
On either side Nidd's umber stream,  
That dances joyously along  
To measure of some mystic song,  
Caught on the cliff or mossy fell  
From gleams of golden asphodel,  
Or Delphos-born Parnassian grass  
And sundew of the dark morass,  
When summer crowned each mountain height  
And clothed the moorland with delight ;  
Here rising hoarsely wild and high,  
Where Woodale Scar frowns darkly nigh,  
And still to louder, deeper note,  
Where lost in Goydon's cavern throat ;  
Here softened to more natural tone  
By every flower it glances on,  
And every graceful fern that weeps  
On lonely How-Stean's marble steeps,

Till issuing in the wider vale  
Nidd half forgets her mountain tale,  
And tunes it to more peaceful scene  
Of sunny fields and meadows green,  
Where beams the primrose on the bank  
In-folded by the herbage dank,  
And half the glory of the spring  
Dwells in the hawthorn's blossoming.

'Tis May-time in the vale below,  
But on the hills lies winter's snow ;  
And still at dawn from crag and cliff  
The frozen fern hangs cold and stiff ;  
While from the moorland, bleak and brown,  
The torrents leap to summer down ;  
And in the upland forest chill  
Scant are the signs of vernal thrill,  
And tardy wakening from duress  
Of long and lonely dreariness ;  
Though spring, o'erflowing from the dale,  
Softens and sweetens all the gale,  
And bears to solitude and gloom  
The joys that wake when meadows bloom,  
And echoes of the songs that rise  
From sunny fields to sunny skies.  
But all too low and too sincere  
Is Nature's song for human ear,  
And Nature's grief to human eye  
Has nought to wake our sympathy ;  
'Tis only when we feel her power,  
And thunders roll and storm-clouds lower,  
And Terror riding on the wind  
Brings Ruin on the flood behind,—  
E'en then we learn not to revere,  
But only how and when to fear.

On Guyscliffe many a sun had set,  
And many a sun shall redden yet  
On Brimham's wild and broken steep,  
And Hartwith's forest dark and deep ;  
And warn the hind to flee the glade  
And seek lone Felbeck's deepest shade ;  
And oft at eve shall Rainstang frown,  
And Nidd at dawn come thundering down,  
And echoing dells their tribute yield  
Till Nidd flows far o'er bank and field ;  
And many a moon her beams shall throw  
On Brownstay's ridge and Heyshaw's brow,  
And rouse the stag from bracken bed  
On Greenhow's lone and lofty head ;  
And wake the elfin folk that play  
Among the ruins, weird and gray,  
Of castles of Titanic power,  
Whose battled wall and keep and tower,  
The giant race in days of yore  
By magic reared on Brimham moor.

Ay, many a peaceful moon shall shed  
Her beams on forest, cliff, and mead ;  
And many a threatening sun shall set  
Ere Nidd, thy echoing steeps forget  
The cries of rage and fear and wail  
That, rising on the evening gale,  
Startle the dale from crest to crest,  
From Swarcliff's brow to Raven's Nest.  
For loud from Willsill's stony street  
Is heard the rush of hurrying feet,  
And Dacre's hamlet, high and lone,  
Hoarsely resounds with curse and groan  
From yeomen in uneven strife,  
Battling for home and child and wife ;

And oft renewing hopeless fight  
To gain some respite for the flight  
Of all the helpless throng that speeds  
Where'er bewildering terror leads ;  
Or frenzied hope some shelter sees  
In the deep shade of leafy trees,  
And guides unerringly and well  
The fugitives to copse and dell.  
Ye would have deemed that Douglas bold  
Once more had left his Northern hold,  
And Randolph led his Scottish crew  
To fire and wreck the land anew,—  
So wild and fierce along the dale  
Sweep the loud cries of rage and wail :  
And startling every craggy steep,  
From hill to hill the echoes leap.

But long ere this the sounds of mirth  
Had fled each yeoman's kindly hearth,  
And ancient hatred of the Scot  
In newer wrongs was nigh forgot !  
For Knaresburgh's stubborn walls that braved  
The storms of fight that round them raved,  
And oft in olden time defied  
The ruthless hordes from Cheviot's side,—  
Now hold within their ample bound  
The minions of a king disowned,  
Troopers that speak the southern tongue,  
And from no yeoman lineage sprung,  
But hirelings bought by hireling pay  
And promise of marauders' prey,  
To daunt with menaces and harm  
Whoe'er in Commons' cause might arm.  
These own no chief but their own will,  
And do no deeds but deeds of ill ;

Nor fame, nor battle glory seek,  
But warfare with the old and weak.  
They recked not how the pillage came,  
What cottage roof was scathed with flame ;  
What ruined homesteads, scarred and black,  
Marked all too well their ruthless track ;  
And many a sire in time to come  
Shall tell the tale to listeners dumb,  
And fire the innocent and young  
With record of their fathers' wrong ;  
And many a maid and matron bear  
Some vestige of that time of fear  
E'en to the grave :—a furrowed brow,  
Or tresses changed in youth to snow.

## CHAPTER II.

## THE OLD COMRADES—NIDDERDALE.

THAT morn had Bryan Ouseburne sought  
The comrade by whose side he fought  
In Conway's foremost battle line,  
When Leslie forced the fords of Tyne  
At Newburn, and that day of shame  
Dated the decadence of Charles's fame.

With Fairfax earliest in the fight,  
With Fairfax latest in the flight,  
Each learned to trust his comrade's word,  
And more than trust his comrade's sword  
Where peril claimed his strength and skill  
Or life hung doubtful on his will  
To dare and do some dauntless deed  
For friend o'erborne and sore in need.

Bryan that morn had brought the news  
That Leslie held the banks of Ouse  
    With all the Scottish host :  
That York, beleaguered and dismayed,  
But little fight with Fairfax made,  
    And deemed her ramparts lost ;  
Nor knew she that, with sword and fire,  
Prince Rupert wasted Lancashire,  
And every western peer and knight  
Who held to Church and Charles's right,  
    'Twixt Solway Firth and Dee,  
Had gathered for the venturous work  
Of bearing aid to leaguered York,  
    And sworn to set her free.  
Yet all too late that aid would come  
If Leslie pressed his vantage home  
    And breached the western wall ;—  
Too few, forsooth, though desperate  
To man her walls and guard each gate,  
Newcastle's sullen whitecoats wait  
    In silence for her fall.  
York was the bulwark of the throne,  
The eyestone gem in Charles's crown,  
    His only hope and stay ;  
Her fall would set the country free,  
And Charles to other lands must flee  
    Or bend to Commons' sway.  
Till noon in friendly keen debate  
About the war the comrades sate,  
    And turned the chances o'er.  
And oft they spoke in tones of hate  
Of Leslie and the Northern state,  
    And wrongs that Yorkshire bore ;  
And deemed such friends in Commons' need  
Were friends to nought save Scottish greed  
    And plunder as of yore.

But spite of shame for Newburn wold,  
And ancient wrongs in story told,  
And though his tongue such friendship spurned,  
And Scottish aid in battle scorned,  
The fitful flush on cheek and brow  
Bespoke the fire that lurked below :  
Whilst quivering lip and angry frown  
Told more than Bryan's speech would own  
Of the fierce tumult in his breast  
So vainly and so long repressed ;  
And Bryan seemed for conflict burning,  
Yet ever from the venture turning,  
And, changing oft from projects new,  
Ever to will, nor dare to do.

Mark Kirkby was a dalesman rude,  
Proud of his lineage and blood,  
And acres broad his fathers won  
From moor and fen in ages gone,  
And ever passed untrammelled on  
From yeoman sire to yeoman son ;  
Proud of the dale that gave him birth,  
A freeman's home—a freeman's hearth ;  
But prouder still in field, at board,  
To own no squire nor knight as lord,  
And dare whate'er in word or deed  
His natural sympathies decreed,  
For all whose grief, or need, or wrong  
Claimed service from the brave and strong.  
Mark Kirkby saw his comrade's mood,  
The flashing eye—the wrath subdued ;  
The scorn that mantled on his cheek,  
And deemed that Bryan, once so bright,  
So joyous at the sound of fight,  
So blithe, so brave with sword in hand,  
When Fairfax led his yeoman band,

Was now by more than battle zest,  
And more than love of war possess,  
And sense of some undying wrong  
Its shadow o'er his mind had flung.  
Moved by a sudden impulse sent  
From heart to hand by kind intent,  
The dalesman grasped his comrade's hand  
As 'twere some old and trusted brand  
That ne'er had failed in peril's hour ;  
And dearer now than e'er before,  
For the changed aspect that it bore.  
Then kindly bade his friend confess  
The cause of his so great distress ;  
If 'twere not aught to tell were shame,  
Or secret Bryan might not name.

The act so free and tone sincere,  
Left Bryan nought by speech to fear,  
And gathering courage as he spoke,  
The tumult of his thoughts outbroke :  
"Thou know'st that, though of yeoman name,  
My fathers won some martial fame  
Against the Scot in olden day  
When bishops fought and led the fray ;  
Their acres free De Melton gave  
As meed for service long and brave ;  
And since, by war and honest toil,  
Their sons have held the ancestral soil,  
And oft in fiery youth have sought  
The camp, and in the battle fought.  
My father fell in Mannheim fight  
Ere I, an orphan, saw the light ;  
His brother Godfrey, sore o'erprest,  
Saw twenty swords sheathed in his breast,  
And, helpless in the throng of foes  
To bear him aid or guard the blows,



Cursed the mad chance of war that brought  
A hundred foes where Bryan fought ;  
Then vowed no power in heaven or earth  
Should draw him from th' ancestral hearth.  
'Twas sore against his will and hope  
I joined the Fairfax yeoman troop,  
And oft he tried to daunt my will  
With tales of useless martial skill,  
And chance that bears e'en heroes down  
To graves unhonoured and unknown.  
'Tis those who live,' he said, ' who gain  
The meed that's rightly due the slain ;  
And those who 'scape a soldier's grave  
Seize on the honours of the brave.  
Thou art the last of all thy line,  
These lands I hold will soon be thine,  
And thou may'st hand them on as free  
To some young Bryan after thee  
As they have come ; thy father's name  
And heritage of honest fame—  
Are they so worthless and despised,  
And chance and change of war so prized,  
That thou canst venture all thy right  
For one short day of frenzied fight?  
Perchance of ruinous defeat,  
And the dread horrors of retreat.—  
'Twere otherwise if some bright boy  
Bridged o'er the gap, 'twixt times gone by  
And times to come, that Godfrey's age  
Might cherish for his heritage.'

"Yet nought of all that Godfrey said  
Could turn me from a soldier's trade ;  
I never of my purpose rued,  
Though oft I marked his silent mood,

And hand upraised to hide the tear,  
And look that bordered on despair :  
Nor yet, when as the time drew nigh,  
His aspect changed, and fired his eye,  
And act and tone alike revealed  
The soldier in such guise concealed.  
' Be best and foremost in the fight  
And, if God will, the last in flight.  
Let Scots,' he said, ' thy prowess tell—  
God bless thee, Bryan ; fare thee well.'  
I never of my purpose rued,  
Though proudly scornful Janet stood ;  
Janet his daughter,—heir with me  
Of all our joys from infancy ;  
And more than sister, more than friend,  
My wayward boyish will to bend,  
Whose look far more than Godfrey's ' nay,'  
I learned instinctive to obey.  
Janet, whose gesture oft had stayed  
Some reckless freak or escapade,  
Unknowing what the power might be  
That gave her such strong mastery.  
She spoke not when I bade adieu,  
And passed the porch and gateway through,  
And lightly to the saddle leapt,  
And gaily through the village swept ;  
And when in camp and field I sought  
Her look to banish from my thought,  
It came like witness from the dead,  
And chode me into shame and dread.  
That shame and dread I never stilled  
Save when my pulse in combat thrilled,  
Or Fairfax urged me to some deed  
That tried my charger's utmost speed,  
And duty claimed her utmost share  
In all that heart and hand might dare.

“ But when the shameful strife was o’er  
Old times, I deemed, had come once more ;  
Godfrey my charger’s trampling knew  
Long ere the bridle rein I drew ;  
And ere from saddle-seat I sprung  
His hand in mine his welcome wrung.  
I marked the tear-drop in his eye,  
His accents tremulous with joy ;  
He greeted me as one who mourned  
A long-lost son too late returned.  
Some trace of care was on his brow,  
Some tresses tinged with early snow,  
Yet laughed he all my fears away  
Till our old life resumed its way.  
But most in Janet’s tone and mien  
Change and embarrassment were seen :  
Her free and fearless tenderness  
That erst had tamed my recklessness,  
And effortless could stir or still  
Each impulse strong for good or ill,  
I felt not, when of war I told,  
And scenes of blood on Newburn wold,  
Though Godfrey’s eye was all aflame,  
And Godfrey’s cheek was flushed with shame ;  
Nor when I spoke with bated breath  
Of hairbreadth ’scapes from wound or death,  
I felt it not ;—it was not there,  
Though never had she seemed so fair,  
And ne’er before with art I strove  
Her sympathy and ruth to move.  
She heard my tale, but heaved no sigh,  
Her cheek was pale—her eyelid dry ;  
A settled calm,—I deemed, of pride,  
My soldier’s speech and art defied ;  
And yet all service duty framed,  
Or friendly acts our kinship claimed,

She did with duteous diligence  
That sought and took no recompense.  
I could not brook the life we led,  
For all the joy of life was fled,  
I grew more reckless day by day,  
Her pride with pride I learned to pay,  
And heedless of unspoken blame  
E'en as I willed I went and came.

"I met her cold and careless glance  
With some more careless utterance,  
And, though unknowing why, I knew  
The breach betwixt us wider grew ;  
Till Fairfax summoned to the war  
His yeoman troops from Wharfe and Aire,  
And sudden as with earthquake shock  
The Ainsty to the conflict woke.  
I was both reckless and aflame  
To join the war as near it came,  
And oft resolved, yet could not bear  
The thought of Godfrey's deep despair ;  
For Godfrey held to Church and King  
With loyal trust unquestioning,  
And deemed they broke the country's laws,  
And marred the Commons' righteous cause,  
Who drew the sword to still debate  
Or seize the offices of State,  
And with light heart and ready hand  
Spread ruin broadcast o'er the land.  
Yet Godfrey held their cause was good  
E'en to the verge of strife and blood ;  
But all beyond, whate'er it be,  
Was treason, crime, and butchery.  
It was not Godfrey's firm rebuke,  
Nor Godfrey's frown I could not brook ;

No trace of anger tinged his cheek,  
No word of blame did Godfrey speak ;  
But gentleness, till now unknown,  
Claimed his strong spirit all her own.  
His aspect, softening to his mood,  
Betrayed his deep solicitude ;  
While every trembling tone revealed  
Some doubt or dread his words concealed.  
And ever as War's rumours came,  
And flushed his cheek with sudden shame,  
A shadow fell—'twas not of fear—  
Upon his brow, and darkened there.  
Twas more the gloom that sorrow gives  
When sickness parts devoted lives,  
And strong, rough-visaged men assume  
A sadness from the open tomb ;  
Yet still unconsciously he strove  
In every act to prove his love.

“ And well I knew 'twas all his care  
To keep me careless of the war,  
Unknowing how the bonds to break  
That kept me there for Godfrey's sake :  
For every tale that Rumour brought  
Of valiant deeds by Fairfax wrought,  
He darkened to a tale of woe  
Where valour felt the coward blow,  
And skill and worth and strength were spent  
In hopeless strife with accident.  
And many a yoeman line that bore  
The stress and strain of England's war  
At Bannockburn and Agincourt  
Found bloody and unhonoured close  
In neighbours' fields from neighbours' blows :  
While many a home the war would leave  
No solace save the right to grieve

O'er manhood ruined in its prime,  
Or youth that perished ere his time ;  
And many an orphaned maid would bear  
The piteous impress of despair  
For love too soon unfortunate,  
Or home bereft and desolate.

“ But when Lord Leven crossed the Ure  
Godfrey could scarce the shame endure,  
That Yorkshire's old ancestral foe  
Should range at will the country through,—  
That foe whom God and Nature sent  
Like wolves of winter, truculent  
And famished to our softer clime,  
To stain each hamlet with their crime,  
And leave by fire and famine traced  
The hideous signs of war and waste,  
And symbol of their ruthless power  
On roofless walls and crumbling tower ;  
Till every village, scarred by flame,  
Bore witness to their deeds of shame.  
Such foemen's sons were foemen born,  
Their heritage was hate and scorn  
And ceaseless war,—by all bequeathed  
Who loved the land their sires had scathed.  
Would Fairfax sell his country's right  
To vengeance, for such aid in fight,  
As comrade grasp the hand imbrued  
With kinsmen's and retainers' blood ?  
'Twere treason to his sires' renown,  
Blacker than treason to the crown ;  
And black and foul the heart must be  
That homage paid to infamy.  
I felt that all he said was true,  
And yet it stirred my heart anew,

I know not how ;—for still I strove  
To prove me worthy of his love.  
But oft I chafed and scarce subdued  
What erst had been but careless mood,  
Till master-impulses confused  
And all my mind with war suffused,  
And, reckless grown, I came to Nidd  
To seek thy counsel in my need ;  
And join Lord Fairfax an thou wilt  
Share the chance honour, and the guilt.”

The dalesman's varying aspect proved  
His interest as the story moved  
From scene to scene :—and gestures shewed  
The strong assent his heart bestowed  
On Godfrey's scorn and ceaseless hate  
Of all that touched the Northern state ;  
And oft his sympathy awoke  
When Bryan of his kindness spoke,—  
His pride in yeoman line, and fear  
'Twould close on Bryan's bloody bier.  
Yet not for fear or love alone  
That ready sympathy was shewn ;  
His kindling glance the thirst revealed  
For all that meets on battle-field  
To try, by trumpet's loud appeal  
And furious charge and clash of steel,  
The cause each holds that God must bless  
With the full glory of success.  
Thus long in doubting attitude,  
While sped the tale, the dalesman stood,  
With warlike zeal by Bryan fired  
And ruth by Godfrey's fears inspired,  
Till as the story's close drew nigh  
The fire forsook Mark Kirkby's eye ;—



Soft Pity claimed it all her own,  
And ere he spoke his thoughts made known.

In few and earnest words he bade  
His comrade heed what Godfrey said :  
Such love as his was all too rare  
To wrong and ruin with despair,  
Or risk his only heritage  
Of hope and solace for old age  
In conflict, howsoe'er the cause  
Might Freedom be and Commons' laws ;  
'Twere otherwise to hearts more free  
To fight for fame and liberty ;  
But kindred ties have higher claim  
Than Commonweal or patriot fame  
On those whose will and right to dare  
The weak and aged claim to share.  
"Bide on ; perchance the time will come  
When mischief threatens kin and home ;  
Then up and dare whate'er thou wilt,  
And heaven itself will share thy guilt."

### CHAPTER III.

#### RELICS OF THE DRUIDS—BRIMHAM CRAGS.

'Twas evening in the vale below,  
Though the high moors were all aglow  
And shimmering still with noontide heat,  
Unconscious of the day's retreat.  
From many a steep and craggy base  
The shadows stole with guilty pace,  
And swift athwart the valley swept  
And slowly up the hillside crept,



Ere, Kirby's parting counsel said,  
The farewell courtesies were paid,  
And Bryan to the saddle sprung,  
And Ramskill's waking echoes rung  
Responsive to the flying steed  
That, startled to its utmost speed  
By prick of spur, dashed bravely on  
To pass the vale ere day be done.  
For rugged was the way and steep  
Through Hartwith's forest dark and deep,  
And Winsley's moorland gave to sight  
No track for wayfarers by night,  
And ten long leagues of doubtful way  
'Twixt Bryan's home and Bryan lay :  
And he must travel far from Nidd  
Ere falling night the pathway hid,  
Or shelter seek in hamlet lone,  
With folk in war suspicious grown,  
And steeled to bar at evening's close  
All entrance against friends or foes.

Bryan had scarce through Pateley passed,  
With stride that told of measured haste,  
When sudden on his startled ear,  
Like thunder-peal when skies are clear,  
Smote the loud cries of rage and fear  
And shrieks of wild despair.  
And, ere from precipice and rock  
The echoes of the strife awoke  
And thrilled the summer air,  
Bryan had reined his charger tight,  
And sate, like some old Paynim knight  
In stone, that hearkens for the fight,  
All silent and aware.  
Instinctively attent and still,  
As dubious of those sounds of ill—

Why and whence issuing—Bryan sate  
In momentary self-debate,  
Then forward spurred precipitate,

Nor checked his headlong course  
Till, by the hurrying throng of flight  
Cumbering the road in helpless plight,

His steed was stayed perforce.

And many a tongue proclaims the tale  
How Knaresburgh's troopers range the dale,  
On plunder bent and deeds of shame  
No tongue may e'en in pity name.

And now in Willsill's hamlet nigh  
All who had stoutly scorned to fly—  
O'erborne and beaten to the ground  
With many a curse, and gibe, and wound—

Lie helpless, while the ruthless band  
Sack cot and grange with equal hand.

Full fifty troopers scoured the road  
On which the forlorn flight had flowed,

And twenty hands would aim the blow  
To lay the luckless yeoman low

Who heedless happened on their path,  
Or ventured to oppose their wrath.

'Twere worse than hopeless task, in sooth,  
To rouse their shame or win their ruth,  
Thrice reckless would the yeoman be  
Who chanced such soldiers' clemency.

The tear to Bryan's eyelid sprung  
Spontaneous at the tale of wrong,  
While lowering brow and flushing cheek  
His mingled wrath and shame bespeak :  
For helpless as the hurrying crowd,  
And all unarmed, the yeoman rode,  
And one poor coward trooper's brand  
Would more than match his empty hand.

'Tweré vain in his defenceless plight  
To seek such overwhelming fight,  
And objectless, and all too late,  
To join his own to their sad fate,  
Who, bruised and bleeding from the fray,  
Fettered in Willsill's hamlet lay.

Few words and earnest Bryan said :  
"God's aid be with you," and "God speed."  
But when the frenzied throng had passed  
He turned his steed and followed last,  
Till Pately promised peace and rest  
And every sound of fear had ceased.  
Then eastward on his homeward road,  
Thoughtful and sad at heart he rode ;  
For Bryan deemed some pathway led  
Circuitous through river bed,  
Or high upon the valley's side  
Where he unseen or safe might ride,  
Skirting the peril far beneath  
By lonely track o'er how and heath.

And now diverging from the road  
A bare and rocky by-path shewed  
The sudden streamlet's brawling bed  
When summer clouds their rain have shed,  
But pathway when those skies are still  
For flocks that browse on moor and hill.  
This track to craggy slope and fell,  
And scarce to steed accessible,  
Perforce the yeoman took,—for near  
The cries in front rose sharp and clear ;  
And equal peril seemed delay  
To aught on Willsill's clanging way.  
Up 'twixt the bracken banks he prest,  
Nor stayed his breathless steed to rest,

Till rose the falcon from his rock,  
And with loud skirr the moorcock broke,  
And faint the cries of baffled wrath  
Woke in the valley far beneath.  
Then Bryan reined his steed and stood  
Securely lone and unpursued.

If thou hast stood and seen—secure—  
Great evil wrought on weak and poor,  
And helpless thou by word or blow  
To stay fulfilment of their woe,  
Or bid them live, courageous still,  
On hope of vengeance for their ill,—  
Then may'st thou tell the thoughts that wrung  
The curse of wrath from Bryan's tongue,  
And caused the tears of ruth to flow  
And flush of shame to tinge his brow,—  
As gazing from the moorland side  
He watched the wild marauders ride  
Hither and thither—near and far  
Where aught could tempt their ruthless war—  
Till evening's mist their shadowy veil  
Had drawn betwixt him and the dale,  
And Bryan saw the eve was red  
On Rainstang's lone and lofty head ;  
Then gave the rein and spurred his steed  
To follow where the path might lead.

But faster than the yeoman rode  
The mist behind him swelled and flowed  
Upward in gentle billows still  
Though wooded dell,—o'er scar and hill,  
Till Bryan saw each moorland height  
Melt in the rising sea of white,—  
Grow wan, and fade, and fail from sight ;

And deepening twilight weird and grey  
Obscured all traces of the way.  
Yet on he fared intently slow  
Where'er his steed found will to go,  
Past boulders of portentous size  
And cliffs that seem for aye to rise,  
Up steeps that ever steeper grew,  
With perils imminent and new,  
Till gentler slope and herbage drear  
Proclaim the moorland crest is near.  
But all that met the traveller's gaze  
Was dense, impenetrable haze,  
Slow parting as his charger cleft  
His way athwart its aimless drift.  
But scarce to try the easier way  
Did Bryan hopefully essay,  
When, surging slowly, fold on fold,  
The mists before more thinly rolled.

And on his startled sight  
Such scene as well might chill the blood  
And daunt the wildest hardihood

Broke through the moonlit night.  
Grim walls of grey and ponderous rock,  
Whose front by some primeval shock  
From base to lofty battlement  
With weird and gloomy chasms was rent,

A Titan's fortress seemed ;  
Where donjon tower of height profound,  
And massive bastions broad and round,  
Cumbering on either hand the ground,  
With ghostly perils gleamed.

Around their age-worn ramparts hoar  
The spectral mists in torrents pour

Tumultuous and still,  
And towering forms of giant mould  
Their silent watch above them hold

And menace unknown ill :  
And yet no sound of warder's tread,  
No clank of harness, spear, or blade  
To human ear was borne ;  
From battlement to buttress foot  
Within that castle all was mute,—  
All death-like and forlorn.  
It seemed as if the womb of earth  
In fiery throes had brought to birth,  
Long ere the feeble times of men,  
The offspring of her mortal pain,  
And Druid folk of eld had found  
The relics of her mighty wound,  
And prodigal of magic power  
Reared bastion wall and keep and tower  
With massive boulders unprepared,  
Unbonded, mortarless, unsquared,  
Till broad and high and weirdly grand  
Rose the vast castle from their hand  
Defiant of the storm  
And all that human pride might will  
In wantonness of strength and skill,  
Or dare to break the charm.

With many a dubious glance bestowed,  
On through the gateway Bryan rode,  
And sudden paused. In front, around,  
Ramparts and towers stupendous frowned,  
And far as eye could pierce the night  
Rose the huge bastions on the sight,  
Buttress and port and wall,  
That, shattered in some awful hour  
Of angered Heaven's vindictive power,  
Now tottered to their fall.  
For here e'en careless eye might trace  
The marvels of the ghostly place,

Some ponderous crag or boulder stone  
Poised on the tapering turret's crown  
So evenly and true,  
Its shadow on the rock beneath  
Would quiver with each gentle breath  
The summer noontide drew.  
And wintry blasts that rent the oak  
And tore the pine-tree from its rock,  
The cypress from the glade,  
Awhile infuriate strove amain  
To hurl it headlong to the plain ;  
Then weary of the onslaught vain  
Around in dalliance played.  
E'en slender boyhood's arm might sway  
In careless feats of frolic play  
The fragment on its base,  
Though all the manhood of the dale  
In simultaneous effort fail  
To thrust it from its place.

Bryan, with rising courage, viewed  
The soundless, lifeless solitude,  
And curious passed with firmer tread  
Where'er his waking fancy led,  
Deeming some scene more wondrous still  
Might make amends for fear of ill ;  
Nor far he strode—his timorous steed,  
From spur and bridle guidance freed,  
With ear attent and nostril wide,  
Close following at his master's side—  
A rocky nook the walls revealed  
With sheltered space,—till now concealed,  
Where still, as erst in ages gone,  
Was set the sacrificial stone,  
Ageworn and hoar, unbloody now  
And stainless as the moorland snow ;



No reeking tide its chalice fills,  
No victim's shriek the silence thrills,  
No ruthless, priestly form is there,  
No awestruck crowd, no wild despair  
Of mother o'er the fettered maid,  
Or thoughtless boy for death arrayed ;—  
With wintry blast and summer rain  
Nature had cleansed each guilty stain :  
The woodland sprites might spread their fare  
Of fruit, and feast unconscious there,  
And quench in glee their dainty thirst  
With dewdrops from that chalice curst :  
All symbols of those crimes were gone,  
And moss and lichen clothed the stone.  
Not e'en the breeze had memory  
To celebrate them with a sigh.  
And high above that altar stone  
Towered in massive grandeur lone,  
As Bryan deemed, when face to face,  
The Genius of that awful place ;  
The rude rock-idol carved of old  
In hideous form of demon-mould  
To awe, insatiate of blood,  
The trembling crowd to crimes renewed.  
But Nature's hand in times long past  
Each feature from the rock erased,  
Softening each line with sun and frost  
Till all its horrid shape was lost,  
And heather white and polypod  
Luxuriant clothed the crumbling god.

Meanwhile on rock and altar stone  
The night a deeper gloom has thrown,  
And Bryan's awed and pensive mood  
Gives place to new disquietude.



No longer now his curious eye  
Can aught of interest espy,  
And hopeless till the dawn of day  
Is quest of the forgotten way.  
Bracken and heath must form his bed,  
The clouds must canopy his head,  
The rocks around their curtain draw  
In threatening shapes of gloom and awe.  
But here e'en weary eyes refuse  
To take the rest his limbs impose,  
Such countless fancies throng his brain,  
And each and all of grief and pain.

Bryan with heedful step withdrew,  
While fast the deepening darkness grew,  
Creeping round many a craggy base,  
Whilst eye and hand its structure trace ;  
Until sheer walls and towering gloom  
Disclose the semblance of a room,  
And weary, worn, with watch unkept,  
He flung him on the turf and slept.  
Awhile o'erpowered and opprest  
Lay Bryan in oblivious rest,  
So deep, so still, it had been death  
Save for the weary, deep-drawn breath.  
Immersed in self, the stagnant brain  
Did nought of earthly sense retain,  
No pictured thought of waking life,  
No echo of its sounding strife,  
No earthborn memories intrude  
To break the spirit's solitude.  
Nirvana and its nothingness  
Can yield no deeper, deathlier peace,  
Or give our being such surcease  
As comes from way-worn weariness.

But deepest sleep to dreams will tend,  
And thoughtless rest in thought will end ;  
And soon the uneasy limbs betray  
The powers within and own their sway.  
Now grasps the hand the unseen blade,  
And strives to swing it high o'erhead ;  
Now Horror stays the half-dealt blow,  
And palsies all the frame with woe ;  
Now Pity wipes the unshed tear,  
While Sorrow grieves in deep despair ;  
Then Vengeance dogs the murderer's path,  
And Justice smites in sudden wrath ;  
And each and all in turn control  
The tumult of the waking soul,  
Till through the strong duress they broke,  
And Bryan to himself awoke.

## CHAPTER IV.

### THE OUTLAWS—BRIMHAM CRAGS.

BUT who are here ? What hands are these  
That on the struggling yeoman seize ?  
These forms that rise amid the gloom—  
Are they the ministers of doom ?  
These awful shapes—these horrid gleams—  
Are they the same that thronged his dreams ?  
Is it for sacrifice they bind  
His arms with many a thong behind ?  
Is it for death the ready blade  
Quivers with threats above his head ?  
'Twere vain, he felt, to wage the strife  
With forms devoid of mortal life,

Or seek to thwart their ruthless will  
With human strength or trooper's skill.  
And soon—ere conscious of surprise—  
Byran in hopeless durance lies,  
And hears, too late, the accents rude  
Of Northern race and yeoman blood.  
Too late to dare the useless flight,  
Or die forlorn, yet still in fight.

With blades unsheathed the outlaw band  
Around their prostrate captive stand ;  
But one, their leader, bids to raise  
And set the bracken heap ablaze,  
And pile the heath and pine-boughs high,  
For they must stay till dawn be nigh.  
In accents stern he bids the crew  
Draw forth and place their prize in view,  
That all might scan his mien and dress  
And shrewdly of his service guess,  
And vote such doom as outlaws mete  
To those who spy where outlaws meet.  
Brave was the yeoman, but the glow  
Of that fierce fire is on his brow,  
And fiercer still the piercing glare  
Of those keen eyes he knows are there,  
In inquest, pitiless and stern,  
To vote the doom he needs not learn.  
And yet that fateful look he paid  
With look as firm and undismayed,  
So well it seemed—'twas almost joy  
The very hate of human eye—  
To know his bonds by men were bound,  
Their voices too had earthly sound,  
That mortal arm—if he must bleed—  
Shall wield the sword and do the deed :

Not fiends that work by horrid spell  
And drag their victim down to hell.  
'Twere well, it seemed, if he must die,  
To die with men, though foemen, nigh.  
But e'en in men who hold life nought  
There runs some vein of curious thought,  
And though already doomed to die  
By all as a discovered spy,  
Bryan their leader bids declare  
His name, his home, his purpose there,  
And why in honest garb he came  
And sold himself to deeds of shame ;  
For well of Bryan's form he guessed,  
His strength of limb, his massive chest,  
His eye unquailing, cheek unblenched,  
And hand as if on sword-hilt clenched ;  
So bold, so resolute his mien,  
As if confronting death he'd been  
Often in narrow ways alone,  
Undaunted and unoverthrown.  
And well the outlaw chieftain knew  
Not one of all his daring crew  
Might chance the combat unaffrayed  
If skill were there to wield the blade.

" I know not," Bryan said, " your claim  
To know my purpose, home, or name :  
If ye are robbers bent to kill  
Whoe'er may dare your murderous will,  
Then work that will, and nameless I  
At felon's hand will silent die.  
I care not that my honest name  
Should rest on lips that know no shame,  
Nor that your gibes and sneers offend  
Some mourning relative or friend."

"Thou liest, traitor-spy ; this band,"  
The leader said, "that I command  
Has ne'er done deed of shame or wrong ;  
'Twas formed to combat with the strong,  
To shield the weak, and make them free  
Who dare not strike for liberty.  
Guy Dayrell's hand hath many a stain,  
But each and all were fairly ta'en.  
'Twas free to give the deadly blow  
That laid the tyrant's minions low,  
Yet every blow Guy Dayrell gave  
Was meant to shield, perchance to save,  
From such as thou and that base brood  
Who stain the land with crime and blood,  
Till every hamlet tells its shame  
With curses on the royal name :  
And every echo of the dale  
Bears witness to the dismal tale.  
And thou wert bold, too bold I ween,  
To venture here 'mongst desperate men ;  
Who and whence art thou ? Speak. I would  
Thou wert not of that cursed brood ;  
I would that fearless strength of thine  
Were in the Commons' cause and mine."

"If ye are as ye say," he said,  
"No band that thrives by robbers' trade,  
But outlaws free who ply your steel  
For peoples' rights and commonweal,  
Then Fairfax must your service own,—  
Perchance we're comrades, though unknown.  
For I have rode in battle line  
With Fairfax on the banks of Tyne ;  
And if ye doubt a trooper's word,  
Or yeoman's will to wield the sword,

Where'er the Fairfax bids me go  
And 'gainst whome'er he names as foe ;—  
Perchance ye did that service share,  
And knew the name of Ouseburne there.  
That name was in his troop enrolled  
When Fairfax fought on Newburn wold."

Like spark that fires the slumbering train  
The name flashed through the outlaw's brain,  
Illumining with instant ray  
The memories of youthful day :  
One moment his keen eye surveyed  
His prisoner from foot to head,  
The next his hanger gleamed in air,  
And Bryan stands in freedom there.

"I know thee now ; thy stalwart frame  
Proclaims thee of the Ouseburne name ;  
I knew thy sire and Godfrey too,  
And comrades knew I ne'er so true.  
What madness made me do thee wrong  
With cruel threat and shameful thong !  
'Twas Bryan schooled my youthful hand  
In feats of skill with spear and brand,  
And when the chance of war I tried  
Bryan was ever at my side,  
And ever chose the fiercest foes,  
Leaving the weakest to my blows,  
Till I to skill and valour grown  
Could dare the combat all alone.  
I saw him in the wild attack  
When thousands drove our hundreds back,  
Alone, undaunted, undespairing,  
Alone the crowding foemen daring ;  
O'erborne, I ween, but undismayed,  
And wielding to the last his blade.

I strove to reach where Bryan fought,  
But vainer quest I never sought,  
So fast, so thick the seething crowd  
In furious torrents 'twixt us flowed.  
I saw him as the foe swept on,  
I looked again, but he was gone.  
'Twas then in one brief moment there  
I learnt the meaning of despair ;  
One hurried glance—'twas not of fear—  
Shewed death was all too surely near ;  
Oh, how importunate, alas !  
In every spear and sword he was ;  
'Twas then I saw that Godfrey sprung  
In front, and clave in twain the throng.  
I saw the space his long sword swept,  
And the red harvest that he reaped ;  
I saw the boldest press more nigh,  
And stricken, reel and fall and die ;  
I knew no more,—a lance's thrust  
I felt, and stumbled in the dust.

“ At last I woke ;—my fevered brain  
Had dreamt of nought but comrades slain ;  
A hundred times had Bryan died,  
As oft leapt Godfrey to my side :  
I saw him deal a thousand blows  
Among innumerable foes,  
And all for me,—who, helpless lying,  
Kept him for ever doomed and dying,  
Yet never dead ; for darkness rose  
Ever betwixt me and the conflict's close.

“ But once awake, my comrades came  
As deeming I had won some fame,  
And told, how, rallying to the fray,  
They found stern Godfrey still at bay

In sorry plight ;—his strength outworn  
With forehead bare of helmet shorn,  
And gashed with an unsightly wound  
Fast streaming like a spring new-found,  
And wasting life ;—yet still he stood,  
Grim, resolute, and unsubdued.

“ In trembling words I scarce contrived  
To ask if Godfrey still survived,  
And why he came not with the rest  
To hear what I so ill expressed,  
The debt I felt, and could but say  
How all impossible it was to pay.

“ Our leaders deemed that Godfrey's feat  
Deserved high praise and honours meet,  
And bade him name, whate'er the cost,  
The meed his valour valued most.  
But Godfrey said, ‘ I have great hate  
Of war and all this martial state ;  
Give me the right, 'tis all I would,  
To leave for aye these scenes of blood.  
I know not how—my brother's fall  
Has made them hateful one and all ;  
And I would vow, if so I might,  
This arm shall ne'er be raised in fight.’  
Though loth to give, they gave him leave,  
And Godfrey left ere morrow's eve.

“ The war flowed on ; old comrades fell,  
And few were left his worth to tell.  
New men of sluggish pulse were come,  
With hearts as dull as hands were numb,  
Who deemed Guy Dayrell's story old :  
To me 'twas far too seldom told,



And all too brief—such love I bore—  
They dared to smile ; 'twas told no more.  
I left them to their senseless boast  
And careless song ; my tale was lost  
On such dull ears. I grew more ware,  
And trusted not their will for war.  
At last some useless truce was made,  
And I forsook the soldier's trade,  
Yet could not bear to till the soil  
In dull, unmitigated toil :  
I ranged the moorlands far and free  
In unrestrained liberty ;  
Their every crag and gill I knew,  
To love their loneliness I grew,—  
They seemed old friends in mute disguise  
That had half-human sympathies.  
I learnt the tracks the wild deer made,  
Their haunts in forest, dell, and glade,  
And oft at first in frolic play  
I drove some loitering stag to bay :  
But when I saw him bravely dare  
His strange and venturous foe to war,  
I turned and left him where he stood,  
Nor sought to spill his generous blood.

“ At length I pressed the chase too nigh,  
He turned to fight—I could not fly ;  
'Twas equal combat, and he fell,  
For I, unarmed, had felt too well  
The glow that peril only gives  
To combatants who stake their lives.  
Some prying forester, but who—  
Had seen the fight—I never knew ;  
And Warden Slingsby deemed the crime  
An outcome of the troublous time.

The home, the lands my fathers held  
He bade me quit,—and he compelled ;  
And when his tyranny I paid  
With reckless deeds in park and glade,  
He set the castle ruffians on  
To hunt me as an outlaw down :  
A price upon my head was laid ;  
That price, I ween, was never paid.  
Then came the war ;—the cause was good,  
Guy Dayrell lent both will and blood ;  
And many a scar he bears to prove  
The fervour of his hate and love.  
This band was formed with me their chief  
To give the harassed hinds relief ;  
To foil the castle of its prey  
And strike whene'er 'twas equal fray,  
Watching like panther on the spring  
For every chance the war might bring.  
Fairfax is debtor for the news  
That nightly comes from Nidd to Ouse,  
And holds 'tis honourable work  
To aid, e'en here, in leaguering York.  
We live in times when friends are foes,  
And brothers die by brothers' blows,  
And neighbours of the thorpe and grange  
Meet in the battle's deadly change :  
If Godfrey choose for kingly right  
To ride with Slingsby to the fight,  
And we should meet, as well we may,  
In the full turmoil of affray,  
I swear by all I hold divine—  
My God, the Cause, this soul of mine—  
To turn in coward haste and fly,  
Or he may strike, and I will die."

“No need,” said Bryan, “for thy vow,  
Godfrey ne’er hated war as now :  
And civil war he deems a crime  
And vestige of the barbarous time,  
Which deeds of valour and high fame  
Redeem not from its sin and shame.  
Thou’lt see the grave restore my sire,  
Quickened with more than youthful fire ;  
The Bryan of thy youth will ride  
And be once more thy battle-guide,  
Ere Godfrey’s hand on hilt be laid,  
Or Godfrey draw his rusted blade.  
For every thought of Godfrey’s breast  
Is how to baulk my battle-zest,  
And shame me from a strife imbrued  
With kinsfolks’, friends’, and neighbours’ blood.”

“So be it then,” Guy Dayrell said,  
“’Twill more than doubly edge my blade  
To know that Godfrey’s hate of war  
Detains him from the conflict far.  
To meet him in the battle shock  
Were more than even I could brook,  
And risk of hostile interview  
Was all the doubt and dread I knew.  
If ’twere not wrong to friend so true  
I’d bid thee welcome to our crew ;  
Our country’s cause and this my band  
Have need of both thy heart and hand ;  
But no. I will not bid thee dare  
The chance and peril of the war.  
If Godfrey change, and troubles come,  
Thou hast with us both friends and home.  
Enough. I see on Greenhow’s head  
The dawn has tinged the heath with red.

Our path and thine together lead  
Until thou leav'st the banks of Nidd ;  
The castle troopers range the dale,  
Nor scorn with arms the unarmed t' assail,  
And I am loth that thou should'st dare  
Alone the peril of their war.  
For though thou art in yeoman guise  
Thy form thy yeoman's garb belies,  
And thy bold tongue would aid their guess,  
And more than e'en thy form confess.  
Short shrift were thine if thou wert ta'en  
By troopers for the foray fain.  
Up, comrades all ! To horse with speed,  
And seek once more the banks of Nidd."

Quick from the gloom the outlaws stept  
And lightly to the saddle leapt ;  
And soon through Hartwith's forest shade  
With cautious pace their way they made.  
And oft their leader paused to hear  
What sounds uprose from hamlets near,  
But all was still,—the foe was gone,  
Their ruthless work too surely done ;  
And few the hinds, who, wan and pale,  
Were there to tell the dreary tale.  
And they were bound, and sore dismayed,  
And hopeless of relief or aid.  
These bade the outlaw chief " God-speed,  
Till Nidderdale of foes be freed."  
Nor stay his hand for peer or knight  
Till Slingsby's troopers dread the fight.  
And Knaresburgh feels his vengeance just  
And melts in clouds of flame to dust.

## CHAPTER V.

## THE VETERAN—OUSEBURN.

FAR o'er the wide-extended vale  
The summer comes on southern gale,  
Not with uncertain step and shy  
As one that woos, yet comes not nigh,  
Too fearful of the haughty brow  
And aspect chill as winter's snow ;  
But like to one that sees afar  
The recompense of tedious war,  
And comes, all confident and free,  
To claim the prize of victory.  
His bride with many a smile returns  
The rapture that within him burns,  
And glows responsive to his kiss  
With countless tokens of her bliss ;  
In all the myriad flowers she wears  
Her ecstasy of joy appears,  
And all the dainty leaves approve  
In whisperings their mother's love,  
As, folded in her lover's arms,  
Earth yields to summer all her charms.

But summer raptures not alone  
To things inanimate are known ;  
A thousand strains in earth and sky  
Proclaim the universal joy,  
A thousand notes to human ear  
Too faint to claim a listener,  
Yet loud as June-voiced nightingale,  
And sweetly clear as his love-tale

To nymphs and sprites of air and earth,  
Who own as of a kindred birth  
Those phantoms of the light that live  
Full lives 'twixt summer dawn and eve,  
Full lives as ours, of grief and joy,  
In one short day of summer sky.  
Nor voiceless they who ply their trade,  
A countless folk beneath the shade,  
To whom the summer mead, I wis,  
A vast and virgin forest is,  
And old beyond all memories  
Of their old men or histories ;  
Not inharmonious is their toil,  
Nor heedless they of summer's smile.

To human ears a coarser strain  
Comes from the labouring fields of grain,  
With promise of rich harvest fraught  
To hinds whose ears can spell the note.  
The vacant folds alone are still,  
The flock roams largely at its will,  
And mead and ing are eloquent  
With drowsy lowings of content.  
The solitary shepherd boy  
Gives utterance to the general joy,  
In mimic emulation rude  
Of songs that rise from field and wood,  
Unconscious what the cause may be  
That moves his heart to jollity.  
Such sights and sounds in field and wood  
Of Nature in her gladdest mood  
Had won stern Godfrey's heart, I ween,  
Into communion with the scene ;  
But other sounds his ear possest,  
And other sights his eye distrest,

And Godfrey hears in each sweet strain  
The cries that rise from battle plain,  
When fail the combatants from fight,  
And faint and far recedes the flight.  
He sees the fields his feet must tread  
Trampled and hateful with the dead ;  
Each crimson flower that decks the sod  
Gleams an accusing clot of blood,  
And each sad note in throstle's strain  
Sounds like the moan of hopeless pain.  
Such sicklied picture of its woes  
The anguished mind on Nature throws,  
Though in her fullest garb the earth around us glows.

Bryan is gone—the morn revealed  
His absence both from board and field ;  
But Godfrey cheats his doubt and fear  
With busy toil till noon is near.  
'Tis noon—the simple meal is spread,  
And still no sound of Bryan's steed ;  
No sound that Godfrey's attent ear  
Can construe into hope or fear,  
Of greeting voice to neighbour calling,  
Or footstep on the pathway falling  
Comes from the village street to tell,  
Bryan is here and all is well.  
Stern Godfrey sits all silent now  
With pallid cheek and clouded brow ;  
His stern set lips and eyelids dry  
Rebuke e'en Janet's sympathy,  
Though oft the maiden tries to speak  
Some words of hope the gloom to break,  
And strives with loving tenderness  
To hide her own so deep distress ;  
For maiden's scorn like bruised reed,  
Frail stay and false in hour of need,

Pierces with its avenging smart  
The already sore and bleeding heart ;  
And love dissembled into pride  
Poisons the wound it fain would hide.  
Bryan is gone, and all her own  
She feels the blame for Bryan gone ;  
Her scorn alone his love had chilled  
And made him reckless and self-willed ;  
She hid her pain and grief and fear,  
When Bryan joined the Scottish war ;  
She hid the joy that inly burned  
When Bryan from the war returned,  
For still affection strongly strove  
Against the new-born strength of love ;  
With filial piety she clung  
To Godfrey, knowing Bryan wrong,  
And deeming that her own disdain  
Might make amends for Godfrey's pain,  
And hide the thought within her breast  
Till Bryan Godfrey's wrong confest.  
The strife is pitiless and hard  
When old love with the new is shared ;  
And oft in half-repentant mood  
Janet her obduracy rued,  
And framed some scheme to break the spell  
Of silence now so terrible ;  
But all too late, on Bryan's mien  
Reckless indifference was seen ;  
Changed and estranged from her, alas,  
And his old self and home he was.

At length the dreary spell was broke,  
And fiercely thus the yeoman spoke.  
" Would God that all this war and waste  
Of yeomen's lives were overpast,



And they who woke this cursed strife  
Had paid the penalty with life ;  
Would God that honest folk could see  
The end that waits their rivalry,  
The scenes of blood, despair, and woe  
These fields of ours ere long shall know,  
If God would rend the veil that lies  
'Twixt them and their sad destinies,  
Give but one pang with anguish fraught,  
One fugitive's despairing thought,  
One moment's glimpse of those who fall,  
One hour of penitence to all,  
'Twould wean them from their frenzied zeal  
For kingly rights and commonweal ;  
But God is silent in the land,  
Nor lifts in ruth or wrath His hand  
To stay with Providence, though slow,  
This pestilence of shame and woe."

Then slowly from the room he strode,  
And sought for sympathy abroad ;  
But though on mead and ing he paced  
Now with slow step and now in haste,  
No interest, naught to soothe his mind,  
In all their gladness could he find :  
Thought recreates unto his eyes  
Old forms of woe in warlike guise,  
And gives unto his ear again  
Sounds fraught with mortal fear and pain ;  
And all of life he hated most,  
And fain from memory had lost ;  
War's deeds, flight, wreckage, and despair,  
All save war's maddening joy were there.  
Such hate he bore of martial strife,  
Such deep concern for Bryan's life,

They marred the balance of his brain  
With frenzy he could scarce sustain.  
Indignant pity swelled his woe  
And bade at times the tears to flow  
For all the anticipated wrong  
E'en Victory conceals not long.

The evening came, and Godfrey still  
Broods silent o'er the coming ill ;  
E'en Janet's whispered, low, "Good night,"  
Scarce marks for him the evening's flight ;  
The kiss she gives, the tears that fall  
Break but awhile the dreary thrall,  
One momentary gleam is there,  
One narrow rift in his despair,  
One little space for fond caressing,  
For solace and parental blessing ;  
A banishment, however brief,  
Of the o'erwhelming sense of grief.  
'Tis gone, and darker than before  
The gloom of fear has gathered o'er,  
And Bryan, like his sire, o'erborne  
By thronging foes, his strength outworn,  
Bryan, deserted and alone,  
All, save relentless valour, gone.  
Bryan, at utmost need betrayed  
By accident or faithless blade,  
Bryan, his last wild struggle o'er,  
Prostrate and ghastly in his gore,  
Filled to the full his mental sight  
With visions of the fatal fight,  
And wrought, in pictures of despair,  
Something akin to madness there,  
The madness of the patriot's mood,  
When useless flows his country's blood,

And Youth and Hope and Valour ride  
Unconscious on the treacherous tide,  
War's glamour all above—beneath  
The silent stream that bears to death,  
Heeding alone in sky and earth  
The sights and sounds that make for mirth,  
War's garish joys, the battle din,  
The thrill of venturing all to win,  
Till the wild whirlpool yawns and sucks them help-  
less in,  
And, nameless from the ruined host,  
Their lives, loves, hopes for aye are lost.

## CHAPTER VI.

## THE CAVALIER—OUSEBURN.

NIGHT brought stern Godfrey no repose,  
The dawn upon his vigil rose,  
The mists their shadowy veil updrew  
And gave the glistening fields to view ;  
A tramp of steeds was on the moor,  
It neared—it ceased at Godfrey's door ;  
Yet, brooding and disconsolate,  
The stern grey man in silence sate ;  
For well his ear the sound could read,  
'Twas not the tramp of Bryan's steed,  
But lighter pace that seemed to play  
In dalliance with the easy way,  
And tune itself unto the mood  
Of the gay cavalier who rode.  
But, Bryan gone, what cares he now  
Though Rupert through the village go.

'Tis such as he, on future day,  
Bryan must meet in deadly fray,  
And Bryan's foes, their cause despite,  
Are Godfrey's too when comes the fight.

Lightly to earth the rider sprung,  
The rein to passing hind he flung,  
He passed the gate and trim parterre,  
Sauntering as one well pleased to hear  
The dangling rapier and the clinking spur ;  
For his was not an ancient race  
That took all things with careless grace ;  
His sire with hoarded wealth had bought  
His title, lands, and place at court,  
And plans and stratagems devised  
To gild the rank his peers despised.  
Young Ennisgold, with studious art,  
Played well the generous soldier's part ;  
Full many a rogue his bounties drew  
To swell Kenaresburgh's ruthless crew ;  
Skilled too their wild applause to catch  
In foray or the fierce debauch ;  
And many a stag his forest sent  
To feed their reckless merriment ;  
His largess on occasions meet,  
Though lavish seeming, was discreet ;  
Much garish goldiness there was  
In each new thing he brought to pass ;  
Yet all the while he kept in view  
And played full well the part he knew,  
With much of careless consciousness  
That passed for cavalier's address  
In peace time, when our nobler traits  
Walk silent on the public ways ;  
Yet he was fair in form and mien,  
And had with other schooling been

Chivalrous knight with heart as true  
As the quick rapier that he drew.

Of varied use, ye well may guess,  
Had been his bounty and address  
To Charles's cause. Kenaresburgh owned  
But one his chief within her bound ;  
And soon, 'twas deemed, young Ennisgold  
Would rule supreme that ancient hold.  
But now alone in peaceful state  
He halted at the yeoman's gate ;  
Lightly from saddle-seat he leapt,  
And gaily through the archway stept ;  
The grange with eye incurious scanned,  
Then drew the gauntlet from his hand,  
And struck the rudely panelled door  
With the great signet-ring he wore.  
Scarce died the sound ere Godfrey came,  
Nor questioned of the stranger's name,  
But bade him, as a soldier's due,  
Accept a comrade's welcome true ;  
And soon within young Ennisgold  
His name and errand 'gan unfold,  
Though marvelling oft, ere he began,  
At the dark brow and aspect wan,  
In doubt if soldier ever bore  
Such haggard look as Godfrey wore.  
More often still his wandering eye  
On Janet dwelt admiringly,  
Well pleased to note the transient blush  
That sudden o'er her cheek did flush,  
The quivering lip, the look that spoke  
The interest that his speech awoke ;  
For he was of that worldly mould  
That deems all things must yield to gold,

And knew no deeper sympathy  
Than the gay gilt that filled his eye ;  
So deemed he, ere his speech was done,  
An easy triumph he had won,  
Assumed the courtier's mien and air,  
And dubbed her mistress, sweet and fair.

" From Knaresburgh's royal keep," he said,  
" I come to claim a soldier's aid ;  
Sir Harry Slingsby bade me come  
And seek thee in thy village home,  
And say that in these troublous days  
When crowd the Scots our southern ways,  
And rebels seek by lawless fight  
To wreck the kingdom in their spite,  
The king—the king, by right divine—  
Claims service of that sword of thine,  
Commands thee, in thy country's name,  
To share the patriot's toil and fame ;  
For thou art of a martial race  
That oft has stood in peril's place ;  
And thou hast valour known and tried,  
And still with loyalty allied,  
Such as in crisis of the fray  
Can turn Misfortune's tide away.  
Sir Harry Slingsby, knight of worth,  
Has summoned all his yeomen forth ;  
But yesterday, with coronet  
And trumpet peal, the muster met  
In Coning's garth—two hundred men,  
I warrant, pledged their valour then  
To right the king, nor stay their hand  
While Leslie treads on English land.  
With forehead bare the good knight read  
The king's appeal, then drew his blade,

Waved it on high, and bade them swear  
To prove them faithful in the war.  
Then rose such shout, 'For God and king !'  
As made Kenaresburgh's echoes ring,  
Starting the malcontents to flight  
With dread of our avenging might,  
Till far in caves and woods they hid  
Their terror 'mid the wilds of Nidd.  
Sir Harry Slingsby bade me come  
And draw thee from thy peaceful home,  
And say, his best and swiftest steed  
(Thou know'st, I ween, the Slingsby breed)  
And whatsoe'er thou car'st to don—  
Cuisses, cuirass, and morion,  
The choicest of the castle gear,  
And all that makes the cuirassier—  
Are thine, if thou wilt serve the king,  
And thy good long-sword with thee bring."

This flattering tale, by Ennisgold  
So seemly and discreetly told,  
Stern Godfrey heard, with knitted brow  
And eye unfired by warlike glow,  
And sate as one too sore distressed  
To feel one thrill of battle zest,  
Till high the gallant's wonder grew  
If this were he whom Slingsby knew,  
The soldier who, if Fame were right,  
Had borne the brunt of Mannheim fight.  
Yet, broad and deep, his forehead bore  
The scar he knew that Godfrey wore.  
"It must be he, yet oh, how changed,  
And how from his old self estranged !"

"My curse upon them, near and far,  
Who woke this fratricidal war,

Earl Manchester and Rupert hot,  
Newcastle and the hungry Scot,  
Whoe'er they be, who hope to gain  
Great pelf from honest yeomen slain;  
This hand of mine shall never share  
The guilt that waits their reckless war;  
My country's foes are mine confest,  
But till they come that sword shall rest."  
With many a word the gallant strove  
The yeoman's stubborn will to move,  
'Twas ever, "'Tis a hateful strife,  
When neighbour seeks a neighbour's life;  
The king may claim such sword as thine,  
But never blow from hand of mine."

Unruffled by the stern rebuke,  
Another course his flattery took;  
He praised the board with bounty spread,  
And the fair mistress at its head;  
Assumed a curious eye to trace  
The marvels of the chimney-place,  
The carven sheaves of various corn  
That the great buttress beams adorn,  
The hearth-dogs and their lion mould,  
The watch that e'en in sleep they hold,  
The black oak settle, vast and high,  
That with the shining delf did vie,  
A summer lounge—though framed to shield  
The hearth from wintry currents wild.  
And much he praised, when chanced to fall  
His eye where on the panelled wall  
Caske, cuisse, cuirass that broad and deep,  
Their guard above the room did keep,  
Though battered by their former use,  
And rusted now from long disuse.



But most the gallant deigned to applaud  
The hugeness of the yeoman's sword,  
The deeds he feigned he knew full well  
Strong Godfrey of its use could tell,  
Though for full twenty years, I ween,  
Hid in its sheath that blade had been.  
Thus, all he saw he magnified  
To please the maiden's household pride,  
And gild her graces with the thought  
Of the great deeds her sire had wrought.

With interest for her Bryan stirred,  
His specious tale the maiden heard,  
And flushed and paled alternately  
As hope or fear gained mastery ;  
Well pleased she was to hear proclaimed  
The deeds her father never named,  
A soldier's deeds in camp and field  
To her till now all unrevealed,  
Far hid beyond those many years of ease  
And girlhood's mem'ries of eventful peace.

Thus, when to noon the morning grew,  
And Ennisgold would say "Adieu,"  
Beside the gate the sire and maid  
His parting courtesy repaid,  
Caressed admiringly his steed,—  
For he was of the Slingsby breed,  
And his lithe form and conscious eye  
Claimed e'en stern Godfrey's sympathy ;—  
Nor saw they till as back they drew,  
And down the street the gallant flew,  
That scarce a stone's throw on the road  
Bryan in moody silence rode ;  
His flushing cheek and firing eye  
Was all that Janet might espy,

Ere sudden from his homeward course  
Bryan had wheeled his startled horse,  
And followed where, in swift career,  
Rode Ennisgold the cavalier.

A startled cry from Godfrey's breast  
His pain, suspense, and grief exprest,  
As Bryan furiously careered  
Along the street and disappeared.  
A sob unchecked, a sudden tear  
Confest the maid's more tender fear ;  
Despair was in her attitude  
As clinging to the gate she stood,  
Pallid and motionless and still  
As one o'erta'en by hopeless ill ;  
Nor moved she till, as Godfrey turned,  
Her secret in one glance he learned,  
And in that glance his grief and pain  
Were doubled o'er and o'er again ;  
So wan her cheek, his own despair  
In tenfold power seemed gathered there.  
His arm about the maid he threw  
And slowly from the gate withdrew,  
With many a word of love and cheer  
To soothe the anguish of her fear,  
Forcing an all too laboured smile  
And lighter step and tone the while,  
And blaming oft his grief unkind  
And selfish fear and love too blind,  
And cursing to himself his mood  
So solitary, stern, and rude.

## CHAPTER VII.

## THE OMEN—OUSEBURN.

I NEED not tell, as days rolled on,  
How changed was Godfrey's look and tone,  
How every word and act revealed  
A strength of love till now concealed ;  
The shadow melted from his brow,  
His fierce eye softened in its glow ;  
The lines of care his cheek forsook ;  
The spell upon his lips was broke,  
And love and sympathy combined  
Filled to the full his aspect kind.  
Yet he was sore at heart and chid  
The grief and fear he strove to hide ;  
And all the powers at his control  
He summoned to conceal his dole ;  
And Janet, though awhile deceived  
His new-found happiness but half believed.

The days rolled by, their ceaseless flow  
Had ne'er before appeared so slow,  
Though every noon the tidings brought  
How fared the siege, what fights were fought,  
And murmurs deep at dawning light,  
And lurid gleams at dead of night  
Told how the culverin was plied,  
How yawned the breach like roadway wide,  
How Leven shunned the assault, nor closer conflict  
tried.

The days rolled by, and still no news  
Of Bryan came from Nidd of Ouse,

'Twas only known, he rode with speed  
And last was seen at Brig of Nidd ;  
A lawless band was in the dale  
That dared e'en royal troops assail,  
And one, of Bryan's form and mien,  
Among them on roan steed was seen.  
Then Godfrey all too surely knew  
Bryan was with the outlaw crew,  
Whose lives were priced, like she-wolf banned  
For murder, by the king's command ;  
And swifter e'en than rebel's fate  
Were his if ta'en in lawless state.

One morn, when louder than before  
Was Yorkward heard the cannon's roar,  
Trembling with fear of coming ill,  
Rose Janet while the house was still,  
Thinking to wile the hours away  
With early duties of the day ;  
And, whilst she soothes her fancy's fears,  
A sound ne'er heard before she hears,  
A sound of arms, that, faint and low,  
Seemed issuing from the room below.

Faint echoes of the clanging fight  
Are heard, 'tis said, at dead of night,  
From caske or breastplate stained with gore,  
As tell they their grim memories o'er,  
By those who've ta'en and dealt the blow  
And slain in fight a worthy foe ;  
And they, of kindred blood, perceive  
At midnight of the battle's eve  
Faint gleams of lurid light that shew  
Some semblance of the battle's glow,  
The last light shed on parting life,  
When closed the foes in mortal strife,

And in the burnished armour's sheen,  
Portrayed in awful forms, Death's ghastly power was  
seen.

So, stealing to the door, she saw  
Godfrey his sword from scabbard draw,  
And push it home, as if with pain,  
And pausing long, then draw again,  
And, with long look of awe and dread,  
Lay it where on the board were spread  
Cuisses and caske, now foul with dust,  
And breast-plate dull with age and rust.  
But while in doubting attitude  
And crowded memory Godfrey stood,  
Janet had placed her hand in his,  
And on his cheek had pressed her kiss,  
Her full eyes questioned of his thought,  
And why those arms are there has sought.  
"Twere best," he said, "to claim the steed;  
Bryan perchance may stand in need,  
And, latest left in luckless fray,  
An outlaw's penalty may pay;  
Borne down by press of thronging foes,  
With none to stay or ward the blows;  
Perchance entrapped in ambuscade,  
No chance, no space to ply his blade,  
In Knaresburgh's gloomy dungeon pent  
Awhile, then to the gallows sent,  
With none by word or worthy deed  
His cause with Ennisgold to plead.  
'Twere best to join the royal side,  
With Ennisgold or Slingsby ride,  
And trust, if Bryan meet mishap,  
To find some way for his escape."

Around his neck her arms she threw,  
And scarce to smile or weep she knew,  
Till all the tale she late had heard  
Of Godfrey's deeds her spirit stirred ;  
The glamour and the old renown  
That skilful Ennisgold had thrown  
Around her father's name obscured  
The perils and the pain endured,  
Ere any deed of worth was done,  
Or meed of praise however small was won.

So, deeming he had but to will,  
And vanquished was all harm and ill,  
With words of glad approval said,  
And smiles and fond caress, the maid  
Bade him her Bryan's peril share  
And see him scatheless through the war.  
But while she spake, upon the board,  
Where lay stern Godfrey's rusted sword,  
Unseen unsheathed before, her eye  
One moment dwelt admiringly,  
Though rust and stain alike declare  
How all unfit it is for war ;  
The next, without or fear or dread,  
Upon the hilt her hand she laid,  
But started back, a sudden thrill,  
Like harbinger of coming ill,  
Shot through her frame, as though her hand  
Had grasped the future of that brand,  
Touching the spirit quick, whose sting  
Lies sheathed in each eventful thing.  
Yet bravely and against her fears  
The blade from rust and stain she clears,  
Though oft it seemed a sigh of pain  
Came as she rubbed each stubborn stain,

And in the growing gleam she sees  
Faint and yet dreadful images  
Of Godfrey from the conflict flying,  
And Bryan pale, unhorsed and dying ;  
Yet still, assiduous at her task, she strove  
To prove her worthy of her Bryan's love.

The days rolled by, those lengthening days,  
When Summer throngs the fields and ways  
With all the splendours of her sheen,  
Her sweet young flowers and vivid green,  
And, clad in all her bright attire,  
Strides fast and far, nor seems to tire ;  
Leaving, where'er her foot hath trod,  
Her glowing impress on the sod ;  
Her joy is in the opening flowers,  
Her rapture in the smiling hours ;  
She strews her gladness on the wind,  
And Earth laughs brightly all behind,  
As, glorying in the lengthening day,  
She dreams not of her own decay.  
The days rolled by, and Janet now  
Watches and waits in dread enow ;  
Though, doubled o'er her zeal the while,  
Her household cares can scarce beguile  
Her fears, now gathering strength and power  
With every slowly passing hour ;  
Or, if they slumber in her breast,  
The Yorkward thunders break their rest  
With presages of coming ill  
That make each day more wretched still,  
Until the ever-growing fear  
Seemed more than human heart might bear.

## CHAPTER VIII.

## THE WISE WOMAN—OUSEBURN.

HALF down the village street there stood  
A little crag, unhewn and rude,  
Left islanded when men had broke  
The village roadway through the rock ;  
And on this little crag there stood  
A hut y-framed of oaken wood,  
Whose thatch, it was so deep, had grown  
With every generation gone,  
And thick with moss and leeks o'erspread  
From ridge to eave was garnished ;  
And, resting on the rock below,  
The roof seemed from the crag to grow.  
Ten little steps upon the rock  
Led to a door of rough-hewn oak ;  
And two small lattices were cut  
Deep in the thatch and lit the hut.

'Twas here, unvisited, unknown,  
Dwelt Mother Dearlove, all alone,  
A witch yclept by luckless swains,  
And deemed the cause of all their pains ;  
Wise woman called by elder folk  
And source of ill in herd and flock ;  
These watched if on the ground she trod,  
Or left a footprint on the road ;  
And marked when sharp and clear the sun  
Her shadow cast at afternoon,  
Wondering if it would wax and wane  
With all the evil in her brain.



And, when at kirk with reverent mien,  
Her form within the porch was seen,  
Through nave and aisle a shiver ran  
And e'en confused the holy man,  
Who, fearful of the coming evil,  
With cross and sign rebuked the devil.  
And yet no evil in the place was wrought,  
No wasting sickness on these folk was brought.

Her words were few, she lived alone,  
Nor half her kindly deeds were known ;  
She soothed the sick with tearful eye,  
But promise took of secrecy ;  
And they, in trembling gratitude,  
Their promise kept, nor ever rued.  
But some to whom she brought relief  
Deemed that she nursed a hidden grief,  
And kept that grief for ever young  
And sacred from the common tongue.  
Chance words would wake old memories  
And start the tear-drop to her eyes ;  
Her tone would change ; her cheek awhile  
Would blanch and quick resume its smile,  
As if with her own heart she strove  
To hide a never-dying love.  
But naught she said, her look forbade  
Intrusion on a heart so sad ;  
Her past had been and still would be  
To each and all a mystery.

One eve, the summer sun was set,  
And silent was the village street,  
Came Janet, weary of the light,  
Yet dreading more the weary night ;  
For, ever as each day began,  
More sad she felt, forlorn and wan,

And, ever with the evening's close,  
Faint sounds she heard of clanging blows,  
And spectral shapes in conflict came,  
When all the west was red with flame,  
And, flickering on the lattice pane,  
Faded and fought and failed again ;  
Till all her heart was sick with fear  
And presage of some peril near.  
Along the silent street in haste  
And up the little crag she passed ;  
She raised the latch, a rushlight's gleam  
Revealed a tiny parlour trim,  
And Mother Dearlove, weird and gray,  
Bent o'er a scarf that once was gay,  
Such as in Tudor times were worn  
By scions of great houses born.  
With startled cry the mother pressed  
Her treasure deep in oaken chest,  
And bade the maid in angry tone  
Her message tell, and then begone.

"Oh, mother, hear me," said the maid,  
"Nor in unthinking haste upbraid ;  
For I am sore distraught and worn  
With watching for my sire's return ;  
All day I watch the distant moor,  
And when the weary day is o'er,  
All night a weary watch I keep  
And hearken in my weary sleep  
For footstep on the threshold falling,  
Or Godfrey's voice on Janet calling ;  
But naught I see and naught I hear  
Save sights and sounds confused of fear,  
That to my tortured fancy seem  
Far more, I fear, than troubled dream ;

For all the village street along  
I hear the steeds careering strong,  
And clanging swords in deadly strife,  
And shouts of men that strike for life ;  
And on the distant plain afar  
I see battalions ranged for war ;  
I see the sign for onset given,  
And countless steeds to battle driven ;  
I see the ranks asunder rent  
And all in wild confusion blent ;  
And ever, where the foes recede,  
Brave men in hopeless anguish bleed ;  
And then I wake and fain would know  
What mean these dreams of strife and woe.  
If thou art wise,—oh, tell me true  
What thou can'st see the future through ;  
For I can bear, whate'er it be,  
Thou tell'st of coming misery.  
I have full faith in Bryan's might,  
And none dare meet my sire in fight ;  
If thou art wise, oh, let me learn  
When Bryan and my sire return ;  
Oh, tell me when will Bryan rue  
His wrong to Godfrey's love so true ? ”

“ Maiden, try not all thy power,  
Thou shalt rue in battle's hour ;  
Dost thou spurn a lover true ?  
Know, then, maiden, thou shalt rue.  
Try not pride and try not scorn ;  
Thou for gentler art wast born.

“ Wouldst thou have thy tale foretold ?  
List then, maiden, thou art bold,

Love is bold, but love is shy,  
Love resents, and love can fly.  
Try not pride and try not scorn ;  
Thou for gentler art wast born.

“ Pride may please on summer day  
With bright sky and posies gay ;  
In chill frost and winter gloom  
Pride will yield to Sorrow room.  
Try not pride and try not scorn ;  
Thou for gentler art wast born.

“ Scorn can chill the fiercest fire  
Of full heart and love’s desire ;  
Scorn can give the deadly blow,  
Ask thy heart and thou shalt know.  
Try not pride and try not scorn ;  
Thou for gentler art wast born.

“ Maiden, where the bravest lie,  
Where the strongest faint and die,  
Where the warrior sinks to rest,  
Thou shalt rue thy ruthless breast.  
Try not pride and try not scorn ;  
Thou for gentler art wast born.

• “ When the battle’s fought and won,  
When the summer eve is gone,  
When the moon is on the plain,  
Thou shalt rue, and rue in vain.  
Try not pride and try not scorn ;  
Thou for nobler art wast born.

“ Know’st thou what love cannot do ?  
Love of love can never rue,

Love of love can not despair,  
Love of love can never spare.  
Try not pride and try not scorn ;  
Thou for gentler art wast born.

“ Wouldst thou know what love can do ?  
Love can trust and think love true,  
Love can wait and peril share,  
Love can suffer, hope, and dare.  
Try not pride and try not scorn ;  
Thou for nobler art wast born.”

“ Oh, mother, hear me, I have none  
To bid my fears and tears begone,  
Oh, tell me what my love can dare,  
And what of Bryan's peril share ?  
And when to strive and how to prove  
My heart is worthy of his love.  
Oh, tell me how a love forlorn  
Can make amends for pride and scorn ;  
And where, outworn with fear and pain,  
New hope and strength this heart may gain.  
Oh, tell me, it is not too late,  
And I will suffer, hope, and wait.”

“ Maiden, from thy terrors cease ;  
Days shall come of love and peace,  
Days of happiness, I ween,  
Though the clouds are dark between ;  
Thou shalt suffer, need I tell,  
Anguish nigh unspeakable ;  
Thou shalt hear what few have heard,  
Sounds too awful to record ;  
Thou shalt see what few have seen,  
Sights that shame e'en battle scene.

Thou hast love and thou canst dare,  
Thou shalt Bryan's peril share ;  
Thou shalt win where warrior's might  
Fails and falters into flight ;  
Thou shalt do what none have done,  
Do the most when most undone."

"Oh, mother, thou art kind indeed  
To give me hope for future need ;  
But I am all too weak to bear,  
Alone, the conflict with despair ;  
Oh tell me how my spirit lone  
May brace itself to sterner tone,  
And patient wait while unseen grows  
The tardy climax of my woes ;  
And thou shalt in my prayers have place  
With those of mine own name and race."

"Maiden, there is strength unknown  
Born of deeds by women done ;  
Hearts that watch and wait forlorn,  
Watch and wait at eve and morn,  
Learn to triumph o'er despair  
Through the secret power of prayer.  
Search thou deep and search thou long  
Through the tale of Zion's wrong ;  
Learn of Jephthah's daughter fair,  
How for sire the child may bear,  
Bear in loneliness and grief  
Sacred sorrow, past relief ;  
Learn of Judith, grim and gory,  
Honoured still in Hebrew story,  
How to dare and when to do  
Deeds that thrill the ages through ;  
Read thou well and ponder long  
Deborah's triumph in her song.

Faith was theirs in prayer and deed,  
Have thou faith and thou'lt succeed ;  
Thou'lt succeed and there shall be  
Days of joy and peace for thee."

Her hope revived, the maiden strove  
Her gratitude in words to prove ;  
But speechless stood, then half withdrew,  
Nor how to thank the dame she knew ;  
Such strife of hope and fear she felt,  
Instinctive at her side she knelt ;  
But naught she said, a prayerful tear  
Welled to her eye and rested there ;  
And all her look, with craving fraught,  
A blessing from the dame besought.  
Upon her brow the mother laid  
Her hand, and blessed the trembling maid,  
Bade her be patient, brave, and true,  
And then, in gentler tones, " Adieu."

## CHAPTER IX.

### THE OUTLAWS' CAVE.\*—KNARESBURGH.

Now turns my tale, like waking dream,  
When slumberers feel the morning beam,  
And start from dream-environed life  
To play their part in human strife.

\* About thirty years ago a cave was discovered in the limestone rock some half mile or less from Knaresburgh. It was of the usual character, with the exception that the only entrance to it was by a hole in the roof, which the inmates must have reached by means of a ladder. On the floor were six skeletons, which at the time of discovery were believed to have belonged to robbers, who, after being tracked to their hiding-place, had been sealed up in it with rocks and earth by their pursuers.

Kenaresburgh's castle crowns the steep,  
And bastioned wall and stately keep  
On Nidd's fair valley frown ;  
And far below, in summer flow,  
The moorland waters come and go  
O'er rocky shelf and stone.  
A hundred tints the summer throws,  
'Twixt break of dawn and evening's close,  
On the bare cliff and wall ;  
A hundred sounds the varying breeze,  
On summer day, from neighbouring trees,  
To warder's ear can call.  
A hundred moorland heights, I ween,  
From turret, tower, and keep are seen  
Dark on the western sky ;  
And many a league of forest green,  
And pastures bright with summer sheen  
The curious glance may spy.  
And nestling by the castle wall,  
Where breaks the cliff in gentler fall,  
Beyond the yawning moat,  
Two hundred roofs the eye may trace  
On terraced steps from brow to base,  
Of hall and lowly cot,  
Where sounds the loom from morn till eve,  
And craftsmen deft the fabric weave  
Of texture rare and thin,  
While cheerful matron speed the toil  
With legendary tales the while  
That wondering maidens spin.

Now, other sounds disturb the vale,  
And eager groups discuss the tale  
A trooper brought at dawn ;  
How Rupert wastes with sword and fire  
The rebel lands in Lancashire,



And, vowing vengeance dread and dire,  
To save fair York had sworn ;  
Seven days would bring the royal force,  
Ten thousand foot, ten thousand horse,  
And every western peer and knight,  
Who held to Charles and kingly right,  
In triumph to the Nidd ;  
For Rupert travels fast and far,  
Nor dallies with uncertain war,  
But conquers by his speed.  
E'en now, in many a hamlet near,  
The gathering yeomen raise the cheer,  
And seize the arquebuse and spear  
Their fathers bore in fight ;  
And trampling steeds the roadways throng,  
As hurrying troopers dash along  
From break of dawn till night ;  
And lumbering wains with victuals stored,  
Forage and beeves for stall and board,  
Toil slowly through the street ;  
For they who travel from afar,  
And bear the stress and pains of war,  
Deserve a banquet meet.

But ere the news one hour was known,  
And whispered in the little town,  
Guy Dayrell on the Yorkward road  
In headlong haste impetuous rode ;  
And ere the tale three hours was old,  
To Fairfax 'twas by Dayrell told  
In camp on Heworth Moor ;  
By noon through all the leaguering host,  
From rearward guard to vantage post,  
'Twas known and canvassed o'er.  
The falling twilight Dayrell found,

With ear attent to every sound,  
And eye that searched the nearer ground  
For friendly form or face,  
Standing alone on Grimbald's brow,  
Where leaps the cliff to Nidd below,  
Soft murmuring at his base.  
And soon from out the neighbouring wood,  
A yeoman form in habit rude  
Stepped swiftly to the place.  
With greeting short, Guy told the news,  
How fared their comrades by the Ouse,  
How soon the town must fall,  
Then bade him take the rein and lead,  
By forest path, his panting steed  
To his accustomed stall,  
A deep recess with trees o'erhung,  
The labyrinth of rocks among,  
In Plumpton's wildering shade,  
Where human foot had seldom trod,  
And reckless horseman never rode,  
Nor truant boy had strayed.

Then plunging in the thicket deep,  
Parting the boughs with mighty sweep,  
Onward Guy Dayrell forced his way,  
Nor deigned for stock or stone to stay,  
Scarce pausing till the opening wood  
Against the sky Kenaresburgh shewed ;  
And warders on the rampart gleam  
Portentous in the day's last beam ;  
And all around, like easeful flock,  
Were strewn huge fragments of the rock,  
Of varied shape and size ;  
And o'er them towering pines upthrew  
A canopy of sable hue  
That hid the upper skies.

The outlaw's eyes intently rest  
On boulder larger than the rest,  
    That lay on rocky ground ;  
He scanned it keenly, o'er and o'er,  
To note if mystic sign it bore,  
    And thrice he paced it round ;  
Against the stone Guy Dayrell leant  
Prolonged but little force he spent,  
    Ere, reeling on its base,  
The massive boulder slowly shewed  
An opening dark and deep and broad,  
The entrance to the grim abode,  
    The outlaws' hiding place.

The signal given, a ladder reared  
Gave access to a cavern weird,  
And soon among the daring band  
Guy Dayrell grasps each comrade's hand,  
Inquires the news and whence it came,  
And bids them wake the slumbering flame,  
Pile on the wood, the gloom expel,  
And learn what news their chief can tell.  
While Dayrell tells of leaguered York,  
The rising flame illumines the dark,  
And all the cavern feels the blaze,  
And chill reflects the cheerful rays.  
Then might each outlaw of the band  
The secrets of the cave command.  
The walls, by trickling waters shaped,  
With curtains of grey rock were draped,  
Winding in many a massy fold,  
So lightly hung, so chastely bold,  
They seemed some housewife's hand to wait  
To draw them when the day grew late.  
Above, on corniced ledge reposed,  
A Gothic arch the cavern closed,

And curious shapes of fruit and flower  
Studded the ceiling thickly o'er ;  
Here, clustered grapes for ever hung,  
Dreamless of vintage mirth and song,  
And full-formed apples, pale and wan,  
Waited the never-rising sun ;  
Here, rosebuds from the ceiling peep,  
Yet never into blossom crept,  
And full-blown flowers with petals wide  
In act to fall were petrified.  
Along the floor a tiny stream  
Shone ruddy in the spreading beam ;  
A narrow clift its entrance gave,  
Its exit was Nidd's margin wave,  
Through which by day  
Refraction's ray  
From the dark waters found its way,  
And mellowed into soft twilight  
The cavern dimly gave to sight.  
Above, great icicles of stone,  
Resplendent in the firelight, shone,  
And tapering columns, rising low,  
With outlaws' harness brightly glow ;  
Cuisses, cuirass, and morion,  
Doffed for relief, were set thereon ;  
Seemed doubled o'er the little band,  
Half at their careless ease, while half as sentinels  
stand.

Guy Dayrell's story briefly told,  
Debate on morrow's deeds they hold,  
And many a scheme they traverse o'er  
To stay the yeomen from the war,  
And bear to York, with utmost speed,  
The news of Rupert's every deed.

Bryan was now, scarce needs it said,  
Apprenticed to the outlaw's trade,  
By Dayrell's side had often fought,  
And deadliest combat always sought,  
Daunting, as one with life accurst,  
Grim Death to do his direst, worst ;  
And fairly won, the outlaw crew  
To reckless daring gave its due ;  
And Bryan, in the little band,  
Next to Guy Dayrell, takes command,  
Though good Mark Kirkby, lithe and spare,  
The swiftest of them all was there ;  
His lands, his hatred of the Scot,  
In newer ills remembered not.

The morrow's dawn Guy Dayrell found  
On more than scouting foray bound ;  
For Spofforth owns Earl Percy's sway,  
Her yeomen his behests obey ;  
Stout Richard Paver holds command  
For his liege lord, Northumberland,  
His trainband marshals on the moor,  
And keeps the wide domain secure,  
In hope, each day, that Rupert's host  
The western hills have safely crossed.  
Priceless as hostage such as he  
Might prove in their extremity ;  
With Paver ta'en and safely held,  
And Ennisgold to truce compelled,  
What fear of outlaw's prayer, such ransom given, re-  
pelled.

Before the gate the band updrew ;  
Their summons sharp the porter knew,  
And barred the door, the while he calls  
Loud welcome to Lord Percy's halls.

In doubt one moment Dayrell sate,  
Then bade his comrades fire the gate,  
And pile the conflagration high  
With pine boughs from the grove hard by.  
The pyre complete, the spark applied,  
The foremost outlaws stand aside,  
And wait, impatient of its speed,  
The fiery issue of their deed ;  
But, sudden as the flight of hail,  
When summer storms the woods assail,  
Loud crashed the hazel thickets deep,  
As when tornadoes through them sweep ;  
They part, as to their steeds they sprung  
The outlaws, and to saddle swung,  
As, issuing from the leafy shade,  
A hundred troopers crowd the glade  
In full career, their sabres flashing,  
And straight upon the gateway dashing.  
To stay to fight were but to die,  
Guy Dayrell bids his comrades fly,  
He sees them flying in hot haste,  
And, deeming he himself is last,  
Spurs his good steed and follows fast.

But Bryan rides with face to foe,  
And reckless deals the deadly blow ;  
Around him throng the gathering foes,  
Full fain, yet daring not, to close ;  
Already fails the direst press,  
And chargers four are riderless,  
When rears his steed in wild affright,  
And Bryan falls, and all is night.  
How fared his friends ? 'tis briefly told ;  
They reached untracked their cavern hold ;  
All day they waited on in gloom,  
Hoping to hear their comrade come ;

They called at night, in thickets round,  
More loud than wont, their signal sound ;  
Each told his tale, 'twas all the same,  
Nor news, nor Bryan ever came.

## CHAPTER X.

## THE CAPTIVE'S DREAM—KNARESBURGH.

BENEATH Kenaresburgh's stately keep,  
Rough hewn in rock, a dungeon deep  
    Her weary captives holds ;  
Above, the broad red standard flies,  
And bravely to the summer skies  
    Spreads wide its ample folds ;  
All gay above, all gloom below,  
The helpless prisoners nurse their woe,  
    Uncaring for their fate ;  
Bent forms with hollow eyes are there,  
Grown wan with dungeon light and air,  
And quiet converse with despair,  
    And pondering on their state ;  
In tears they pine ; soon tears will fail,  
And silence yield to childish wail,  
    And wail to cheerless death ;  
From rusty chain and noisome den  
Reprieved awhile to light, and then  
    The charnel ground beneath.

Apart from these foredoomed to die  
By sure and slow captivity,  
In little cell, whose lowering roof  
To urchin's play might give reproof ;

So close its walls of morticed stone,  
If two must pass, 'tis one by one,  
And floor so jointed that the eye  
No crevice 'mid the gloom may spy,  
A prisoner lay, of stalwart mould,  
Outstretched upon the pavement cold,  
Supine and motionless ; alas !  
Awaiting outlaw's doom he was.  
His sinewy limbs no cords enthrall,  
No fetters bind him to the wall ;  
For e'en if Bryan's strength had broke  
Wide opening through the walls of rock,  
He only for his pains would win,  
And still would be immured within  
The castle's court, and ready blade  
Would end for aye his escapade ;  
Twice bound with walls of stone, the cell  
Secures its inmate all too well.

All day lay Bryan motionless,  
Unknowing of his strong duress ;  
The evening came, and still he slept,  
No useless watch around him kept ;  
The moon sank low, the dewy air  
Entered and shed its burden there ;  
The chill through all his frame is stealing,  
And waking life, though slow, revealing ;  
His limbs their burden indicate  
In movements inarticulate,  
And strive, as one who, being free,  
Dreams only of lost liberty.

Dreams Bryan, but the nearer past  
Is from his memory erased,  
And incidents of recent life,  
The pains and perils of the strife



Are not upon the mirrored scene  
Of what life was, and he had been.  
The further past is all he sees,  
Instinct with painful images ;  
Boyhood and early prime appear  
In glowing pictures, all too clear,  
And in them all is Godfrey there ;  
Now high on Godfrey's shoulders borne  
To see the reapers in the corn,  
Now hand in hand, in summer fields,  
Where every step its interest yields.  
Anon, he rides with Fairfax forth,  
And Godfrey's fears are nothing worth,  
As gaily to the war he fared,  
And thrilled with peril, known and dared,  
While Godfrey, resolutely calm,  
Grows gray with dread of coming harm.  
Weary and faint at last he was,  
Outstretched among the summer grass,  
Yet chill and drear the breezes blow,  
And deeply falls the wintry snow ;  
He feels his throbbing pulse grow still,  
And limbs refuse to do his will ;  
Hardens his frame to icy stone,  
And all of life, save thought, is gone,  
Intensest thought for being free  
To know its useless liberty,  
And feel whene'er to act it strives,  
Thought only for itself survives.

Not long he lay in such duress  
Of conscious, dreaming helplessness ;  
His summer couch is now a bier  
Standing beside his sepulchre,  
And all he is the morrow's light  
Will hide for aye from human sight ;

'Tis Death—And yet he seems to hear—  
Without the night is chill and drear—  
Strange sounds that issue from below,  
Unearthly sounds of pain and woe,  
That slowly, as by effort great,  
Grow into words articulate.

He strives to hear—'tis Godfrey's tone  
That issues from the chilling stone ;  
" Bryan, awake ! 'tis Godfrey come  
To save thee from an outlaw's doom ;  
Bryan, awake ! " He tries to wake,  
And answer to the summons make ;  
Yet still he sleeps, though restless now,  
Great drops are gathering on his brow ;  
His limbs convulse with sudden start,  
And life returns through every part ;  
Strong agony his frame released,  
But all too late, the sounds had ceased.

Instinctive, whilst his dream was breaking,  
He grasped his brow to still its aching,  
Athwart his cheek his hand he swept,  
For e'en in sleep had Bryan wept ;  
He spoke, but answer came there none,  
He touched his couch, but it was stone ;  
The roof he felt, and either wall  
And they were granite, one and all ;  
The clammy dew, the hideous gloom  
The dream explained—it is his tomb.  
And yet no grave-clothes does he wear,  
No tokens of the dead are there ;  
With pain he rose, and tried to explore  
His sepulchre, and found the door,  
And it was stone, a mighty block,  
Hewn from a bed of slaty rock ;

Immured beyond all power to save,  
The little cell must prove his grave.

Yet Bryan held his life so cheap,  
He did not groan, nor sigh, nor weep ;  
No fear to die, no hope to live,  
Nor wish nor power had he to grieve.  
Deep in the wall, a loop-hole square  
Gave entrance to the chill night air ;  
There Bryan leant in hope to view  
The new world early dawn might shew  
Beyond the grated iron bar ;  
'Twas moonless now, with not a star,  
And night so black, that all between  
Naught seemed to be, nor ere had been.  
But dawn is near, the zenith pales,  
And coming day the dark assails,  
Gladdening the path he travels on,  
And all the earth with conquest won.  
Slow, faint and formless to the sight,  
The nearer scene crept from the night ;  
In front, a huge, dark-looming mass  
Crowned with a hazy star there was,  
That shapeless with the night was blent,  
Whereon there grew a battlement,  
And tower and staff with crest of gold,  
Whence drooped a listless banner's fold ;  
And Bryan knew—his dream was told,  
'Tis Knaresburgh's high and massy hold ;  
His tomb, a prison cell, and he  
Fore-doomed some cruel death to die.  
Yet sighed he not, he shed no tear,  
He had no will nor strength to fear ;  
And if some form of pain arose,  
It woke but hatred of his foes ;

And felon's grave, it roused no shame,  
And scarcely stirred his heart to flame ;  
And death, what was it but reprieve  
To one who cared not now to live ?  
He only wished, it was not hope,  
For strength to scorn the rack and rope,  
And curse the crowd that hailed his death  
With the last power of parting breath.

## CHAPTER XI.

## THE DUNGEON—KNARESBURGH.

BUT dawn upon the walls is breaking,  
And to its toil the town is waking,  
Faint rumblings of the stony street  
Mingle with heavy tramp of feet,  
And noise of harness rattling hoarse,  
As guards renewed stride on their course  
But through them all came high and clear  
Delightful sounds to Bryan's ear,  
The joyous strains, for ever new,  
Of summer birds his boyhood knew,  
In field and woodland avenue.  
And now, their songs distinguished well,  
Each minstrel's form his mind can tell ;  
Of each, its sprightliness and play  
In greeting of the opening day ;  
'Twas sweet to know that they were free  
Nor suffered for their liberty ;  
'Twas sweet to hear them ere he died,  
Their gladness even Death defied,  
Till all his heart felt satisfied,

And calmer thoughts his mind possess  
And even hate forsook his breast ;  
E'en felon's fate would bring no pain,  
If he but heard their jocund strain,  
And on his failing senses fell  
The notes his boyhood loved so well.

But now within from keep to port  
Grows busy all the castle court,  
And hurrying forms his prison passed,  
And curious eyes are upward cast ;  
While he instinctive shunned their view,  
And from the grate reluctant drew,  
Yet crouching by the opposing wall,  
Where brightest gleams, though faint, did fall,  
And he might watch with constant eye  
The little plot of deep blue sky.  
Thus passed the day—one only break  
Did Bryan from his reverie wake,  
When hoarsely shrieked the tortured lock,  
And backward swung the door of rock,  
And silent on the pavement-stone  
A warder knelt and placed thereon  
Scant fare and coarse, a meal austere,  
Though meet for a doomed prisoner ;  
No word nor sign betwixt them passed,  
Each deeming word or sign but waste.

Meanwhile the loitering hours toil on  
Toward the setting of the sun ;  
From keep and tower the glamour fails,  
The zenith's glow to moonlight pales,  
And faintly gleaming points of light  
Are struggling with the luminous night ;  
And Bryan notes each tiny star's  
Eclipse behind his casement bars ;

He sees them come with careless eye,  
But sadly marks them swimming by ;  
From whence they came he might not guess,  
Nor all he dreamt of them express ;  
He knew that they were free, and he  
Might love them for their liberty.  
And like a stream, congealed till now,  
That feels the May-time coming slow,  
The current of his thoughts 'gan flow.  
Aside the veil his memory threw,  
And gave his recent life to view,  
With every daring incident  
Of his career with Dayrell spent,  
Till faintly on his mental sight  
Came, picture-like, the Spofforth fight,  
And he rode headlong on the foe ;  
But naught beyond could memory show,  
And utter darkness lay between  
What now he was, and then had been.  
He stretched his limbs and found at length  
Naught wanting of his former strength ;  
No wound was there, his only pain  
Was the dull aching of his brain ;  
But how he came to such duress,  
Was more than he could even guess.

How long in reverie he sate,  
Musing upon his helpless state,  
He heeded not, he took no note ;  
'Twas all the same, to dream or not.  
So still was courtyard, wall, and keep,  
The stars alone seemed not to sleep ;  
Nor voiceless in their swift career  
To Bryan's all attentive ear ;  
Faint songs were theirs, yet magical

To hold all heaven and earth in thrall,  
And breathless night make musical.  
But Bryan starts—the pavement stone  
Gives forth a low sepulchral tone,  
An echo faint of stealthy tread,  
As if men spoiled the newly dead.  
Nearer it came, it grew more clear,  
Against the stone he pressed his ear ;  
Nearer it came, and nearer still,  
The while he bade his heart be still.  
Two sudden blows, and close below ;  
'Tis but a stone that parts them now.  
Is it some ghostly minister,  
That comes to wake his heart to fear ?  
Or cheat the gallows of its prey,  
Through pity of the coming day ?  
Or spirit sent from upper air,  
To bend his stubborn will to prayer ?

Such thoughts as these had come and gone,  
Whilst trembled still the pavement stone,  
And echoes of the blows are flying  
Along the cell and faintly dying.  
'Twas but a moment, and his name,  
Hollow as far off thunder, came ;  
"Bryan, awake !" with sudden bound  
Leapt Bryan backward from the sound ;  
The flash that rends the stately oak,  
With unanticipated stroke,  
Spurns not the careless hind beneath,  
Who shelters from the tempest's wrath,  
So rudely, as the thought of wrong  
To Godfrey's love his conscience stung,  
And back in terror Bryan flung.  
'Twas Godfrey's voice ; again it came,  
Again it called on Bryan's name ;

He knew the tones of pain and fear,  
That old remonstrance in his ear,  
For they had seared his memory,  
When he was reckless, wild, and free ;  
He feels them now, and shame and tright  
Recall the dream of yesternight ;  
Wan spectre forms, in horrid guise,  
He fears from out the floor will rise,  
To chide and mock his agonies ;  
For all too late is vain regret,  
When prisoner and Death are met.  
Again the voice, more loud, more clear,  
And yet no spectre forms appear.  
"Bryan, awake !" it barely ceased  
One moment from its strange request.  
"Bryan, awake !" he crept more nigh,  
Forgetful of past agony ;  
And, breathless on the dreaded stone,  
Lay motionless, extended prone.

"Bryan, awake ! 'tis Godfrey come  
To save thee from an outlaw's doom ;  
Bryan, awake !" a tear, a sigh  
Escaped his lips, bedimmed his eye.  
"Does Godfrey call ?" he faintly said,  
"Is Godfrey numbered with the dead ?  
Or some lost spirit, chained beneath,  
Captive and fettered, e'en in death ?"  
"'Tis Godfrey come, in human shape,  
To aid thee, Bryan, to escape.  
Do all I counsel thee, if thou  
Wouldst win thy life and freedom now ;  
Stand, where betwixt the grated bar,  
Thine eye can hold the Waggon Star,  
Then all thy gathered efforts prove  
Against the wall ; the floor will move



Athwart the cell, and close below  
A passage for thy flight will show."  
Bryan with heedful care obeyed,  
The sluggish stone his strength repaid,  
And, moving slowly from its base,  
Revealed a cavern in its place ;  
Through the dark opening Godfrey rose,  
Harnessed as if with foes to close ;  
Like spectre from the gloom he stept,  
Then fell on Bryan's neck and wept.

## CHAPTER XII.

## THE VOW—KNARESBURGH.

O triflers of the summer day,  
Think not that love is maiden's play ;  
Think not that youth alone can know  
Love's tenderest fear or rapturous glow ;  
Think not that age can quench the fire  
Of love's invincible desire,  
That rugged frame and iron will  
Feel not the impassioned lover's thrill,  
Or aspect pale and brow serene  
With love have never harnessed been,  
Or hearts that bleed have never burned  
With silent love too rudely spurned.  
There glows within the human breast,  
More deep, more hidden and o'erpressed  
Than the dull, secret fires that burn  
Within the heart of old Auvergne,  
A fiercer flame, that, smouldering long,  
Bursts forth impetuous, wild and strong,

To melt in agonies of love  
The adamantine crust above.  
Youth carves its idol from the stone,  
And worships tremblingly alone ;  
Then Manhood builds an altar rare,  
Labours and lays its treasure there ;  
Then kneels Old Age and softly pays  
Its services of prayer and praise ;  
Each deems the influence divine,  
And suits its worship to the shrine ;  
Love is the spell that binds them all  
Within the universal thrall.  
And it was love, love freed from fears,  
That bowed stern Godfrey's head in tears,  
Love terrible, in joy or pain,  
To kindle madness in the brain,  
Now fluttering from the deep abyss  
Of madness in that passionate kiss.

But Bryan feels each trembling limb,  
And his eye now with tears is dim ;  
He knows what he had shunned till now,  
How great the love he scorned to know.  
Godfrey at length the silence broke,  
And in low tones and earnest spoke.  
" Bryan, thou knowest whence I come  
To rescue thee from outlaw's doom ;  
That I have soiled my faith to save  
An outlaw from a felon's grave.  
I knew thou wert in helpless plight,  
And came to thee on yesternight ;  
I heard thy slumberous breathing deep,  
As if thou wert in dreamful sleep,  
And long I strove that sleep to break,  
But all in vain ; thou didst not wake.

I went at last, thou didst not hear,  
To pass another day in fear.  
Already hadst thou ceased to live,  
But for solicited reprieve ;  
Young Ennisgold, our captain, prayed  
To have thy fate awhile delayed ;  
To-morrow's eve Prince Rupert's force,  
Ten thousand foot, ten thousand horse,  
With every baron, knight, and squire  
The king can claim in Lancashire,  
Will sup and sleep, and they must have  
Fit entertainment for the brave ;  
An outlaw thou, to die wert doomed,  
Ere they their Yorkward march resumed.  
I saw thee in the Spofforth fight,  
Regardless of thy comrades' flight ;  
I deemed thee lost, and held my breath,  
For thou wert boune to certain death ;  
I saw our squadron cleave and part,  
And Terror half released my heart ;  
But coward blade—I saw the blow,  
And deemed that man my direst foe,—  
Through nerve and straining sinew shore,  
And then, I knew, the fight was o'er.  
Quick as the thought, I need not tell,  
Thy charger, reeling backwards, fell ;  
I saw thee fall, the renegades,  
A score were round with lifted blades,  
When Ennisgold, with scoff and jeer,  
Bade them in mocking tones forbear ;  
Thy form would grace the castle wall,  
And neighbouring malcontents appal.  
On a slain trooper's steed they flung,  
And bound thee on with cord and thong,  
Then loosed the rein,—the affrighted steed  
Fled homeward at his utmost speed.

"I saw thee at the castle gate,  
Unconscious of thy hapless fate ;  
I gave my aid, the cords unbound,  
I searched thy limbs, there was no wound ;  
I knew the fall had numbed thy brain,  
And thou, insensible of pain,  
Might still revive and live again.  
We bore thee to this narrow cell ;  
For I had learned its secrets well,  
And, hopeful still, in my despair,  
I deemed thou might'st its secrets share.  
Of all our band, a chosen few,  
Six trusted men those secrets knew.  
This opening by a cunning hand,  
For service in a siege, was planned ;  
Hence ruder hands have hewn a way  
Through the deep rock to outer day,  
'Neath buttressed wall and bastion broad ;  
Narrow and dark, this cavern road,  
Its mouth with trailing vines o'ergrown,  
Leads where the cliff breaks steepest down,  
And far below the murmuring Nidd  
Frets ceaselessly her rocky bed.  
Within the entrance, hid with green,  
Axle and draw-well chain are seen,  
That we might draw in time of need,  
Our water nightly from the Nidd ;  
And he, whose life besiegers banned,  
    And on whose head a price was set,  
Might have some exit at command,  
    And shun the swiftly closing net.

"And thou must fly, and venture all,  
'Tis but a captive's ordeal ;  
The woods are deep on Bilton's brow,  
And thou may'st hide and rest enow ;

At nightfall, hie thee to the Ouse,  
Tell Janet all thou hast of news ;  
Then northward haste, and tell thy tale  
To my old friends in Wensleydale,  
And bide thee there, and live in peace,  
Till this accursed war shall cease.  
Bryan, I soiled my soldier's faith,  
For that the least reward is death ;  
If thou art ta'en, withhold my name,  
And save thy line and me from shame ;  
A veteran I—to me last even  
The charge of all the guard was given ;  
I bade them watch with careful eye,  
For beacon flame, the Yorkward sky,  
And, while they watched, I paced alone  
The western rampart's track of stone,  
And, sheltering in a bastion's shade,  
I fixed the ladder rope I'd made ;  
As from the battlement it hung,  
And o'er the precipice it swung ;  
I tried it—it was safe and strong—  
And knew 'twas near the secret spot,  
The opening of the cavern's throat ;  
I prayed for help—my prayer was heard—  
No warder's foot the silence stirred ;  
What need my further progress tell ?  
I found the cave, and reached thy cell.  
I soiled my soldier's faith, and I  
Must make amends for treachery,  
And purge my crime by daring deeds,  
When Rupert to the battle leads,  
In charge forlorn, or hopeless stand,  
When dauntless strives the latest band.

“ And, Bryan, Bryan, thou must swear  
To keep thee from this useless war.

There, on the wall, the moonbeams shine,  
Thy prison bars have traced the sign  
In shadow of the Love divine ;  
Lay thou thy hand upon that cross,  
And swear by Him who died for us,  
By Him who bled upon the rood,  
By all thou holdest true or good,  
Thou wilt this outlaw band forsake,  
Nor part in coming conflict take,  
That sword of thine shall ne'er be tried,  
E'en though by Ennisgold defied ;  
That thou wilt shun these scenes of strife,  
And only draw to save thy life."

On the dark emblem Bryan laid  
His hand, and in low accents said :  
" By Cross and Crucified I swear  
To keep me from this useless war."  
" Bryan, that oath is writ in heaven,  
Thy past by me is all forgiven ;  
And thou art dearer than before,  
To me and mine—what need of more ?  
Save that, if thou thy word forget,  
And I and thou in fight are met,  
I swear no power shall stay the blow,  
I'll lay thee, as a traitor, low.  
But thou, I know, art brave and true,  
And all thou promisest will do,  
And we, when all this strife shall cease,  
Will meet in thankfulness and peace."

Stern Godfrey now—his duty done,  
And all he hoped for fairly won ;  
His prize the vow, by Bryan made,  
To shun for aye the soldier's trade—

Bids Bryan follow where he leads,  
And prove each footstep as he treads.  
One hurried glance did Bryan cast,  
Then from the prison gloom they passed  
To deeper gloom—it seemed of death,  
So chill, so damp that cavern breath—  
One parting gleam was downward thrown,  
And shewed the walls and dew thereon ;  
One sickly gleam of prison light,  
That faded into deepest night,  
As slow recoiling on its base,  
The massive stone resumed its place.  
And now he breathes the free night air,  
And hears the murmuring Nidd below ;  
He sees the moon on pastures fair,  
And feels new Freedom's generous glow.  
Not words but tears his feelings tell,  
One last embrace—he bids " Farewell ! "

While Godfrey checks the windlass strain,  
Bryan, the deeply rusted chain  
Three times about his chest has wound,  
And swung him o'er the gulf profound.  
Above, the grinding chain ; below,  
The murmurs that to ripples grow  
Remind him how the peril flies,  
How near is Freedom in disguise,  
Grim Peril's friend, and Venture's prize.  
And now he feels the rush of Nidd,  
And staggers on her rocky bed,  
Dark moorland waters o'er him flow,  
Chill to his limbs as April snow ;  
Now he has felt the firmer ground,  
And from his chest the chain unwound ;  
And pausing on the further bank,  
Where hazels grew and willows dank,

To note if ill to Godfrey fall,  
And how he scaled the frowning wall ;  
He sees him o'er the rampart rise  
Darkly against the eastern skies  
One moment, then the ladder thrown  
Falls slowly to the river down,  
And all is still—that sign is sure,  
Godfrey is yet unseen, secure.

## CHAPTER XIII.

## THE BETROTHAL—OUSEBURN.

PERFORCE, a brief and breathless rest,  
His peril past and pain exprest ;  
A moment's doubt his steps delayed,  
Ere Bryan further flight essayed.  
He draws his breath full freely now,  
And plunges in the stream below,  
O'er rocky shelf and shallow strides,  
And with strong step the stream divides,  
Nor dares to try the easier bank,  
Or grasp the pendent willows dank ;  
For well he knows the dewy ground  
Will yield the scent to prying hound ;  
And foes more dreaded and more keen  
Than vengeful eyes of baffled men  
The dawn and Ennisgold would place  
Too surely on the fatal trace.  
At length a low and wave-worn rock,  
O'er which at intervals there broke  
The narrowing torrent's whitening crest,  
Affords him anchorage and rest.



There gently from the stream recedes  
The glimmering lawn in further meads,  
And ambushed Coghill hears unseen,  
Tall spruce and cedar boughs between,  
Nidd's struggle, as she labours on,  
Taking from every day her tone :  
Now murmuring with her summer tide,  
Or threatening in her winter's pride ;  
Yet never from the strife declining,  
Nor ever at her task repining.  
Here Bryan first the stream forsook,  
Though perilous the path he took ;  
Nidd's current ran too deep and strong  
For swimmer's arm to brave it long,  
And certain were the fate of him  
Who dared, where she forbade, to swim.  
But Coghill passed; the stream was broad,  
And Bryan through the shallows strode,  
Till, dark on either hand and high,  
The towering banks obscured the sky ;  
Here Bryan feels his flight is stayed,  
And gladly seeks the deepest shade.

From Bilton's pine-encumbered brow  
The moon had passed an hour ago,  
And dawn is in the upper air,  
And doubly dark the woods appear,  
Ere Bryan to the covert creeps,  
Frames a rude bracken couch and sleeps.  
Outworn, in dreamful sleep he lay  
Through the long hours of summer day,  
And if the tramp of trooper's near,  
Or angry curses reached his ear,  
They were but as the voice of Nidd  
Fretting below—he did not heed.

But when the westering sun sank low,  
A slanting sunbeam smote his brow ;  
Soft and intangible the stroke,  
Yet the strong spell of sleep it broke ;  
And Bryan started with a cry  
To face the foe he deemed was nigh.  
But naught was there to wake his wrath,  
And all was still, save Nidd beneath.  
His limbs were free, his strength renewed,  
In his old self unchanged he stood,  
Thoughtful of how he late had fared,  
And the dread peril Godfrey dared.

When twilight fell on stream and wood,  
Forth from his covert Bryan strode ;  
Nidd's further bank he reached, yet long  
To copse and thicket's shadow clung,  
Nor Scriven dared, nor Hay-a-Park  
Till twilight deepened into dark ;  
E'en then he shunned the beaten track,  
And toiled through lonely field and brake ;  
Nor deemed his flight was surely done  
Until Mauleverer's gates he won—  
Mauleverer through the county known  
For hatred to the Church and Crown—  
With quickening pulse and breathless haste,  
Bryan to Ouseburn safely passed,  
And gladly notes the casements dark  
And absence of the watchdog's bark ;  
One moment at the gate he stood,  
Doubtful to say the thing he would,  
That tale, so old yet ever young,  
Of love by maiden's coldness stung,  
Of hasty word and reckless mood,  
And tones and looks misunderstood.

A light within the parlour shone—  
'Tis Janet watching and alone—  
A careless step—'tis lost in night,  
Yet sudden moves the glimmering light ;  
The latch is raised by trembling hands,  
And Janet on the threshold stands.  
One word and only one she spoke,  
Yet countless memories it woke ;  
One word, his name, is all he hears,  
Yet, oh, 'twas full of hopes and fears ;  
Who ever dreamt one word could tell  
So large a tale, and oh, so well.  
For love is like the summer tide  
That, all unnoticed on the main,  
Disguised beneath a brow of pride,  
Still to the waiting shore must strain.  
With aspect resolutely calm  
She hides the impulse of her breast,  
Till near she feels her lover's form,  
And thrills with raptures unexpressed.  
All tremulous and coy for shame  
She lingers, nearer fain to move ;  
Then faints and falls and breathes his name  
In tones all musical of love.  
Thus wins the shore the summer tide,  
Forgetful how to bear she strove,  
Forgetful of her former pride,  
And nothing knows but present love.  
Her love at last she dares to own  
In murmurous ripplings on the beach,  
And maiden's love, in sorrow grown,  
Reveals not more of love by speech.  
And Janet's love, so long repressed,  
In silence nursed and unconfessed ;  
So long with secret anguish borne  
Beneath a counterfeit of scorn,

Forgets its simulated calm  
At nearness of her lover's form ;  
She murmurs once that lover's name,  
Sinks on his breast, and feels no shame.

Why try to tell what ne'er was told  
By bard or troubadour of old ?  
Why draw with pupil hand the scene  
That ne'er by master's touch hath been  
Pourtrayed in fitting tints and tones,  
When love to love its rapture owns ;  
And all is wonder and surprise  
At love caught hiding in love's eyes ?  
He sate, where erst boy Bryan sate,  
And she, where once in childish state,  
She ruled, his queen, with attribute  
Of autocrat most absolute ;  
She told the fairy tale she told  
In marvelling childhood's days of old,  
Of fay that loved a warrior bold,  
A wondrous tale, yet ever new,  
She told it now, and it was true.  
He told his tale, a tale of blame,  
Where every word had tone of shame ;  
Thrice reckless, obstinate, unkind,  
To Janet's love and sufferings blind ;  
To Godfrey twice a renegade,  
Whose hopes and cares were twice betrayed ;  
He thrice and more deserved the fate  
Of outraged Nature's reprobate ;  
Thrice forfeit was his life and more  
To the great love that Godfrey bore ;  
And vainly were that life bestowed  
To pay the triple debt he owed.  
His self-reproach the maiden strove,  
Love-like, to stifle with her love ;

And though she felt his tale was true,  
And though her heart condemned him too,  
Yet all is well, and love is new.

She took her dying mother's gift,  
The dearest of her heirlooms left,  
A ring of gold with shield, whereon  
A maid and lion crouched were shown  
Deep graven in cornelian stone ;  
His right hand in her own she drew,  
    And set the token ring in place,  
And bade him to his love be true,  
    Nor fall from her good grace.  
She told him of the power of rings  
To shield true hearts from hurtful things ;  
And how true hearts have power to shield  
Strong hands from wrong in camp and field ;  
How every word of promise given  
Is writ indelibly in heaven  
In lustrous gold that shines so bright,  
That e'en to heaven it gives more light  
Or blackens in a foul decay,  
As when bright gold is changed to clay ;  
And many signs of inner things,  
Unknown to our imaginings,  
Through lack of simple grace and faith  
To know things have not end in death,  
Nor yet beginning on the earth  
When they have come to natural birth,  
She told him in her earnest way,  
As they were things of everyday,  
To which Spring, Summer, Autumn came,  
The morning sun, the pale moonbeam,  
And gave them joys, in flower and fruit,  
Not any less for being mute.

How heard she, when the midnight breeze  
Held converse with the restless trees,  
Amid their voices, faint and thin,  
The mingled sounds of battle din,  
The onset, shock, the crash of steel,  
The victor's shout when squadrons reel,  
The sudden pause, the whispers dread,  
As if men told the countless dead ;  
How she aside the curtain drew,  
And peeped in fear the lattice through,  
And saw the myriad flash of blade  
And points of spears for onset laid,  
Cuirass and nodding helm and plume  
Far off amid the leafy gloom,  
Encountering in deadly fight,  
While watched the moon and gave them light.  
And she, at such dread sound and scene,  
More fearful and distressed had been  
Than she by any words could tell,  
But he was here, and all was well.

#### CHAPTER XIV.

##### THE STRUGGLE—OUSEBURN.

BUT, hark, along the village street  
There comes the tramp of chargers' feet ;  
Then loud command before the gate  
To rein their steeds and silent wait ;  
Then one in arms from saddle leapt,  
And lightly on the pathway stept.  
" Oh, hide thee, Bryan," Janet said,  
"'Tis Ennisgold, I know that tread."

And he, as wide the door was flung,  
Behind the long oak settle sprung.  
"What mean you here at dead of night,  
What want you," Janet said, "Sir Knight?"  
"Fair Mistress Janet, I have come  
To bear thee to a worthier home;  
My want is thy fair form and face,  
For thou my stately halls wilt grace;  
And I would have thee wed Sir Knight,  
And be my lady from this night.  
Thy father rides in my command,  
And bade me win thy heart and hand,  
And bear thee hence, for thou art lone.  
Nay, Mistress Janet, why that frown?  
And why that flush and kindling eye?  
My troopers wait, and we must fly.  
Come, Mistress Janet, I command."  
Upon her wrist he laid his hand;  
But ere around her shrinking form,  
To aid his words, he threw his arm;  
Bryan has from the shadow sprung,  
The crouching hearth-dog high has swung;  
And crashing on the miscreant's brow,  
Falls the full vengeance of the blow,  
As flashed the rapier from its sheath  
Too late to stay or deal the death  
One moment's respite to the blade  
Had dealt to Bryan's breast instead;  
But this denied, the sudden stroke  
Felt like the gathered levin's shock,  
So swift, the half-formed thought of fear  
Warned not the tongue of peril near;  
A soldier's instinct bared the sword,  
Ere framed his parting lips one word;  
But even instinct came too late  
With skill to stem the tide of fate;

Death instant stilled his starting heart  
And silence claimed his every part ;  
No quivering limb, as if in strife,  
No paroxysm of parting life  
Epitomized the tale untold  
Of all that ceased with Ennisgold.

Nor swifter falls and fades the light  
On darksome ways, on summer night,  
When, gathering silently and still,  
Night and the storm the landscape fill,  
And onward fares the traveller,  
Half conscious of some peril near ;  
He knows not why or whence his dread,  
Save from his strangely echoing tread,  
Till sudden breaks the tempest's wrath  
The soundless gloom about his path ;  
The momentary flash displays  
In instant panoramic blaze  
The nearer scene, the certain death  
That yawns, another step, beneath ;  
Awestruck and impotent he stands  
To will or do what fear commands,  
And, sinking nerveless on the sod,  
He fears and waits the will of God.  
So swiftly flashed and passed the scene  
Bryan and Ennisgold between,  
That, ere one word of fear she spoke,  
Or pity in her breast awoke,  
Full finished was the deadly stroke ;  
And Janet, fainting and o'erprest,  
Recoiled and sank on Bryan's breast.  
And he her trembling form caressed,  
And strove to soothe her fears to rest.  
He bade her nerve herself for flight,  
Nor dread the terrors of the night,



To be, for sire and lover, brave ;  
'Twas least and all he deigned to crave ;  
For instant was his purpose ta'en  
That she must fly, and he remain,  
Until, when mead and stream were crossed,  
Pursuit were vain and trace was lost ;  
If she but fled, her uncle Ralph  
Would hide and keep her doubly safe.

With tears and sobs she strove to turn  
His will, but he was more than stern ;  
'Twas all her hope, to fly alone,  
And he could fly when she was gone ;  
For well, the impatient band, he knew,  
Would seek their leader and pursue.  
Then passed they to the orchard gate ;  
Yet still the trembling maid would wait,  
With sad presentiment of ill,  
For love strove with her duty still.  
But he was firm,—one silent space,  
One hurried kiss, one last embrace,  
And she was gone—the dewy mead  
Was soundless to her flying tread.  
He watched her fading form, until  
'Twas lost to view, and all was still.

Then slowly to the room he strode,  
Undid the fingers from the blade,  
With care, as mother had bestowed,  
Who for the grave her son arrayed ;  
For youth can claim from foes a tear,  
Though shed upon unhonoured bier ;  
And headstrong Bryan, as he knelt,  
For youth so stricken, pity felt.  
Outward he passed, he reached the gate,  
Where still the careless troopers wait ;

The nearest steed a trooper holds,—  
'Tis riderless and Ennisgold's,—  
Cajoling sounds and tightening rein  
His tossing head can scarce restrain ;  
He champs the bit and paws the ground,  
Yet lists and hears the faintest sound ;  
And now upon the path he hears  
A footstep come, and pricks his ears ;  
One moment, questioning and mute  
And motionless from head to foot ;  
But ere he spurns the shameless cheat  
Bryan has gained the saddle seat ;  
His rigid frame and curious mood  
Gave Bryan all the chance he would ;  
Scarce touched was mane or saddle yet  
Ere in the seat he safe was set.  
Nor aught too soon, the first surprise  
Gives place to wild and vengeful cries,  
And twenty blades are fiercely flashing,  
And twenty steeds on Bryan dashing.  
Around they press, they bar the way,  
They know 'tis he of Spofforth fray.  
He struck to earth the luckless wight  
Who held the rein ; from left to right  
He thrust the venturous troopers back  
Who dared to press the near attack ;  
Then straight upon the throng he rides,  
And it instinctively divides,  
And passage free and fair affords,  
Though gleamed on either hand their swords ;  
One moment lost, irresolute,  
They follow now in wild pursuit.

## CHAPTER XV.

## PRINCE RUPERT'S WELCOME—KNARESBURGH.

WHY starts the stag from bracken bed  
On sterile Harlow's lonely head,  
And tossing high his antlered brow  
Enquiring scans the plain below?  
His quivering limbs bespeak his fear,  
His ears attent some peril near,  
His nostrils sniff the summer air,  
But find no cause for terror there;  
No taint is on the listless breeze,  
No hound or hunter's form he sees;  
All lonely, desolate, and still  
Are distant stray and moorland hill;  
Midsummer and her Sabbath charm  
Are on the earth, and all is calm.  
What broke his careless dreams of ease  
In such still solitude and peace,  
Ere half his drowsy rest was done,  
And still rode high the summer sun?  
High and erect in form he stands  
And all the nearer scene commands;  
Near or afar his questioning eye  
Can naught of fearsome form espy,  
Some dreamful memories of the chase  
And recent peril on his trace  
Perchance have brought the sudden pain,  
And roused him from his sleep in vain,  
And he in peace may slumber on  
Till falls the dew and day be gone.  
But ere he can his couch re-seek  
Deep thunders on the silence break;

Again—Again—he needs no more,  
With flying feet he quits the moor,  
And far in leafy Crimpdale  
At length both fears and efforts fail,  
Where summer sunbeams never stray  
Or, coming, make but twilight day ;  
There, deeply hidden and distressed,  
He finds a couch but takes no rest.

Why sudden starts the drowsy town,  
This summer Sabbath's afternoon ?  
And, thronging every narrow street,  
Do eager neighbours neighbours greet,  
And in glad tones the news repeat,  
While kindles every eye to flame,  
And every tongue holds Rupert's name ?  
Why stand the doors wide open flung,  
While pours the joyous crowd along ?  
Why stoops old age with flushing cheek  
Its gladness to the child to speak  
And at the open lattices  
Their lovers' joy do maids express  
With smiles and summer garlands thrown  
In fearless gratulation down ?  
And why, when low the whisper ran  
Through nave and aisle, from man to man,  
Staid men reclasped the sacred book,  
And with light step the church forsook ?  
The swelling anthem soared and ceased,  
While wondering stood the startled priest ;  
The choir forgot their triumph strain,  
The organ pealed, but pealed in vain ;  
Still half the prayers were left unprayed,  
The praises half unsung,  
The good man's counsels all unsaid,  
Though trembling to his tongue.

All save the sound of hurrying feet,  
And tumult of the distant street  
Were hushed in stately nave and aisle,  
Though strong hands seize the ropes the while,  
And, crashing from the belfry, speed  
Prince Rupert's welcome to the Nidd.

'Twas Rupert's welcome, loud and deep  
In thunders from the castled steep,  
That broke the woodland monarch's sleep,  
And, rolling far in echoes dread,  
The news to hall and hamlet sped.  
Rupert is come, its note of pride  
The trumpet pealed—the cliffs replied,  
Rupert is come. In shouts of joy,  
The untiring crowd repeats the cry,  
Rupert is come—and town and wall  
Are gaily decked for festival.  
The gates are wide—what need to fear  
When Rupert and his host are near,  
And gathering fast are loyal men  
On stately lawn and village green,  
Who knew the summons from afar,  
And mustered fast and fierce for war?  
Rupert is come—the magic name  
Has kindled every heart to flame;  
They know the cause, and Slingsby's blade  
Is ever for the right arrayed;  
God and the King is all their cry  
The Prince will lead to victory.

Meanwhile, a hundred eager hands  
Fulfil the governour's commands;  
The court, so lately stern and bare,  
Assumes unwonted festive air;

Table and bench, in order ranged,  
Its martial aspect quickly changed ;  
Long ranks of ancient tankards stood  
To hold the nut-brown liquor good ;  
And many a glittering goblet graced  
The board where Rupert's seat was placed ;  
The keep sent forth its treasured store ;  
Plumpton and Scriven added more ;  
Tancred and Gascoigne crest were there  
On cup and flagon graven fair ;  
Ribstone her guardian lions sent,  
Her cross on azure Goldsborough lent,  
Till many an heirloom there was seen  
That in Crusader's grasp had been  
Twice consecrated by the hand  
That Paynims slew in Holy Land,  
And lips that kissed the earth where trod  
In human form the Son of God.  
And by each goblet there were laid  
Two summer roses, white and red,  
With emblem writ in letters fine,  
" Two brothers in a cause divine ;"  
And on the wall, in roses white,  
A cross and crown hung full in sight ;  
And underneath a massive blade  
In blood-red roses was pourtrayed,  
Symbolic of the hand that wrought  
Relief, and reason why they fought  
For Church and King and York in need  
From rebel host and Scottish greed ;  
And writ below that all might read,  
" Brother of Lancaster, God speed."

Beyond the eastern wall the while  
The crowd speeds on the festive toil ;

Some piled the faggots, stirred the flame,  
And some with haunch and baron came ;  
High mounts the blaze, the sputtering fire  
Provokes and keeps alive desire ;  
The fragrant clouds add keener zest  
For the anticipated feast.  
Around the roast strange tales they tell,  
How Rupert is invincible ;  
His stroke more swift than musket ball,  
Or thunder-bolt on foe to fall ;  
His steed so thoroughly disciplined  
To know his fiery master's mind,  
To stretch himself to utmost speed,  
When Rupert would to battle lead,  
To seek unerringly by guess  
Where strives the thickest battle-press,  
To limp, to falter, and to stand  
For foeman worth his master's brand,  
Then all his splendid pace regain,  
When Rupert had that foeman slain,  
Nor through the varying contest feel  
One guiding touch of rein or heel,  
The while his master plies his busy, blood-gilt steel.

With glee they note, as, one by one,  
Huge casks of wine pass slowly on,  
Through street and gateway deftly rolled  
To feast the feasters uncontrolled ;  
For they who come so free and fair,  
And bear the toil and stress of war,  
Should revel unrestrained and feel nor stint nor care.

## CHAPTER XVI.

## THE FEAST—KNARESBURGH.

WHILE slowly sinks the loitering sun  
The feast fares fast and furious on,  
And many a jest at random sent  
Affords fit scope for merriment.  
No longer now the tables groan,  
Huge baron and rich haunch are gone ;  
Tankard and cup alone remain,  
With flagons filled and filled again,  
Not ranged in bright and careful line,  
But chancely set and stained with wine.  
At every jest or story told  
The liquor flowed all uncontrolled,  
And every toast of friend new-made  
Calls the full tankard to its aid,  
Its meaning better to express  
And fill the gap their lips confess.  
Yet never strayed their thoughts afar  
From the rough incidents of war ;  
Their toasts, the roses, white and red,  
Prince Rupert and his gallant speed,  
The King, the Church, and York in need ;  
Though some more reckless than the rest,  
Toasted Lord Leven with a zest ;  
For they who thrive by soldier's trade  
Must have fit foemen for their blade.  
But one of careless air and mien,  
Rising on Rupert's right is seen ;  
A youth in camp and castle reared,  
Where oft his song the feast had cheered ;



The Muse's laurels he had won,  
And many a reckless deed had done ;  
A scion he, so ran the tale,  
Of lordly house in Wensleydale ;  
His looks bespeak the cavalier,  
His harness an eventful war ;  
With gesture he his wish expressed,  
And sudden all the tumult ceased ;  
And in full tones that clearly rung  
Bastions and battlements among,  
Their welcome to the Prince he sung.

Prince Rupert has come o'er the hills of the West,  
A gallant emprise is the meed of his quest,  
An oath has he ta'en like a knight of crusade,  
His caske ne'er to doff, till there's blood on his blade,  
And to wear his cuirass until rebel or Scot  
Shall dint it with pike or have pierced it with shot,  
Or, failing war's chance with the fast-flying foe,  
Till thrice round York ramparts Prince Rupert shall go.  
Then give him gay welcome, 'tis knightliest work  
To break the stern leaguer that threatens fair York.

Prince Rupert has come, and the best in the land  
Are riding full armed at Prince Rupert's right hand ;  
For the torrent of war and the turmoil of fray  
Forsooth will be wild when the Prince leads the way ;  
And knights of the red rose and lords of the white  
Are rivals in haste to be first in the fight,  
And burst on the rebels with levin-like wrath,  
Or tame the wild wolves that have come from the North.  
Then give them gay welcome to castle and hall,  
They ride to redeem the proud city or fall.

Prince Rupert has come, and his yeoman array  
Are keen as the pack when on scent of their prey ;

On their casks there are dints where weapons have  
played,  
And stains on their gauntlets and blood on each blade ;  
Cuirasses are gleaming, pikes sparkle on high,  
But the brightest of all is the gleam of their eye ;  
Oh, if the stern rebels fair contest refuse,  
They'll give the fierce Scot a deep grave in the Ouse ;  
Then give them gay welcome to supper and bed,  
In York they will sup ere the morrow be sped.

Prince Rupert has come, and the fame of his speed  
Has spread with the breeze 'twixt the Aire and the Nidd ;  
There's foam on their steeds, for they travel in haste  
Who ride with the Prince, if they will not be last ;  
They clomb the wild steepes of the dark Clitheroe,  
They raced o'er the moors on the track of the roe,  
They feasted in Skipton till dawning was nigh,  
Then dashed to the Wharfe like the hounds in full  
cry.  
Then give them gay welcome to castle and town,  
They ride to redeem a fair gem for the crown.

Prince Rupert has come, and the banks of the Nidd  
Re-echo the welcome and praise his good speed ;  
The yeomen of Scriven are thronging the hall,  
The gray knight of Studley is speeding the call ;  
There is spurring in haste on Beverley mead ;  
The young squire of Thornville is girthing his steed ;  
Tancreds, Lamplughs and Goodrickes are seizing their  
gear,  
And Wentworth's avengers from Harewood are near.  
Then give them gay welcome from rampart and keep,  
They'll sup in Kenaresburgh, in York they will sleep.

Prince Rupert has come—they will howl by the Tweed,  
For the ravening wolves have been baulked in their  
greed ;

Argyle and Dalhousie, Lord Leven and all,  
They came with the Spring, with the Summer they'll  
fall ;

There's anger at Kirkby, at Allerton grief,  
And the psalms of the rebels wax plaintive and brief ;  
Wild Fairfax will rage when the herald of news  
Draws rein in his camp on the banks of the Ouse.  
Then give them gay welcome, Scot, rebel, and friend,  
Where they meet they will fight, where they fight they  
will end.

Approval loud from every tongue  
Greeted the closing of the song ;  
So well it said what each would say  
Of Rupert and the coming fray,  
That each must pledge again his faith  
To follow Rupert to the death.  
" The Prince, the Prince," is all their cry,  
" The Prince will lead to victory ;"  
And deeper draughts than e'er before  
They drink to Rupert o'er and o'er.  
But loud and clear the trumpet peals,  
And Rupert for their ear appeals ;  
The tumult wild that signal smote,  
Each tongue was mute ere ceased the note.  
Ye might have heard the listless breeze  
One moment in the whispering trees,  
Or murmuring Nidd in summer flow  
Chafing her shelvy bed below,  
The martins twittering on the rock,  
Or cushat in the distant oak,  
As Rupert of their warfare spoke.

" Brothers in arms, our cause divine  
Claims all your services and mine ;

I have come, and with me a gallant band  
Of peer and knight from the western land,  
With hearts as gay as yon standard thrown  
By the summer breeze o'er your ancient town ;  
And I bear at my heart the King's command  
To spare not of steed, spear, musket, or brand,  
To set you all free from the rebel host,  
And harry the Scot till the border's recrossed.  
And these yeomen stout—they are friends indeed,  
Steadfast and strong as the cliffs of your Nidd ;  
The roses are red in the land they till  
As the rebels' blood that their good swords spill ;  
Their homes were free, and their fields were fair,  
Yet they left them all and they mustered for war ;  
For the rebels came in a foul disguise,  
One hand held the sword, in the other were lies,  
And bade them choose, but their rallying cry  
Was, " God and the King, the sword, not the lie."  
Sweetheart and sister have bade them " God speed "  
To their brothers in York and their King in his need ;  
With musket and pike and hearts full of faith  
For God and the King, they'll be true to the death.  
And, hark, I know by that rising cheer  
That bands of our village friends are near,  
True sons of the soil where the roses are white,  
And the hind is as keen as his lord for the fight.  
Ye have heard the tale, by your fathers told,  
Of the ruthless Scot in the days of old ;  
Ye have seen the trace of marauder's torch  
On defenceless transept and sculptured porch ;  
Ye were born to a hate too long repressed,  
Ye drank it in on your mother's breast ;  
Ye were nurtured well on that ancient hate,  
Now prove ye its virtue in manhood's estate ;  
Ye have suffered long, but the hour is come  
To strike for your King, your country, and home ;

Your vengeance has slept through a terrible night,  
But to-day is the dawn of its waking in might ;  
Ye are rising in wrath, ye are eager to share  
In our march to the Ouse and the honour that's there.  
First mutter a prayer for fair York in need,  
From rebel host and from Scottish greed,  
Then bid ye Prince Rupert to battle lead,  
And fearlessly follow his standard sign,  
And dare all things in a cause so divine.  
Ho !—raise the shout for England, her people, church  
and crown,  
Her battles in the rightful cause, her glories and  
renown ;  
And never may the northern hordes hold these fair  
walls and towers,  
And never may the rebel crew rule this bright land  
of ours."

Scarce ceased the fiery tale of wrong,  
Ere from his seat each soldier sprung,  
Drew the bright sabre at his side,  
And in fierce tones exultant cried.

"See, we promise, pledge our faith,  
We will follow thee to death ;  
We will follow, fear thou not,  
'Gainst the rebel and the Scot ;  
Lead thou us, and they shall never  
Us from our allegiance sever ;  
They shall never rule our land,  
We will meet them, sword in hand ;  
Musket throw and pike away,  
Hand to hand, in deadly fray,  
Foot to foot, if they will stay.  
We will follow—follow on,

Till the fight be fairly won,  
Till the strife be surely done ;  
Long our vengeance has delayed,  
Sheathed too long has been our blade,  
Too long Justice has been stayed ;  
Lead thou us, and we will prove  
For our King and thee our love ;  
Lead thou us—we will not rest,  
Will not revel, will not feast,  
Till fair York has been released.”

Hot Rupert owns with glance of fire  
And flushing cheek their martial ire.  
“I see, I hear your pledge,” he said,  
“To follow fearless where I lead.  
We will not stay—yon fading sun  
Shall find at dawn our task half done ;  
Yon moon, now pale in evening’s ray,  
Shall light us on our Yorkward way ;  
So to your pleasure, one and all,  
Till midnight chime and trumpet call.”  
And now they chide the night’s delay,  
And strive to wile the hours away ;  
They bid the minstrel cavalier  
Once more to charm their listening ear  
With anecdotes of recent war ;  
And he with quick assent arose,  
To tell how Lathom’s mistress bore  
The rude assault of countless foes,  
And dauntless drove them from her door.

## CHAPTER XVII.

## THE LADY OF LATHOM.

“YE know the tale, my comrades, my comrades from  
the west,  
Of Lathom’s dame of warlike fame, of all my tales  
the best ;  
I’ve told it oft in other rhymes, and yet ye never tire,  
’Tis ever new to men like you of loyal Lancashire.  
Your wives and sisters tell the tale in better words  
than mine,  
Your little children lisp the praise of Stanley’s ancient  
line.  
From many a hall and cottage goes up the daily  
prayer,  
God bless our King and country and Lathom’s lady  
fair.  
And ye, my future comrades, though ’tis ours the tale  
to tell,  
The gallant deed is England’s, and your heritage as  
well ;  
For all who love the rightful cause, and strive with all  
their powers,  
Are heirs unto one heritage, this glorious past of ours.  
It was the hour of early dawn, on a dull late winter’s  
day,  
And bleak was mead and upland, the woods were  
gaunt and gray,  
When the warder on the Eagle tower, his lonely  
vigil done,  
Scanned earth and sky with eager eye, for signs of  
day begun.

Four times each day the lady in her chapel knelt in  
prayer,  
Four times she paced the ramparts with dauntless  
mien and air.  
Then louder grew the thunder, and the storm of shot  
and shell  
From the furious rebel leaguer on those ramparts  
fiercer fell;  
And the shrieking bomb has fallen where her children  
are at play,  
But she bids them mind their gambols, 'tis the rebels'  
careless way.  
And never paled that lady's cheek, nor quailed that  
lady's eye,  
Her look was full of scorn, yet calm and resolute and  
high.  
She little dreamed that, ere the sun had reached his  
summer height,  
Her chapel with the standards of those rebels should  
be dight,  
And the fierce relentless leaguer should be scattered  
near and far,  
Some slain in Bolton's bloody streets, some prisoners  
of war.  
Yet still she prayed and paced the wall and cheered  
her drooping men,  
And soothed, as only woman can, the wounded in  
their pain;  
And, where she passed, the fighters their cheeriest  
looks did wear,  
The sick forsook their couches, and the dying strove  
to cheer.  
But all the while that she did smile, the valiant lady  
knew  
The falling bombs did penetrate her chamber through  
and through;



For the huge death-dealing mortar, scarce a furlong  
from the wall,  
Into every nook and corner dropped the fiery hissing  
ball.  
So she planned the sudden sortie, and her silent  
breathless pack  
Burst on the slumbering rebels, and three furlongs  
bore them back ;  
Then they drew the ruthless engine in the track of  
their retreat,  
And they brought it to the lady, and they laid it at  
her feet,  
And they spurned it with the foot, and they mocked  
it with the tongue,  
As it lay within the court, no more a minister of  
wrong.  
And the fierce and furious rebels were cowed and in  
dismay ;  
And the crumbling walls of Lathom had respite for a  
day.  
But straightway to her chapel the lady did re-  
pair,  
And her men-at-arms with dripping blades and bat-  
tered helms were there ;  
And they raised the loud thanksgiving and breathed  
the loyal prayer,  
“ God bless our King and country, and Lathom’s lady  
fair.”  
And from that morn the leaguer drooped and lan-  
guished day by day,  
And their fierce exultant menaces and curses died  
away.  
At dead of night they took their flight, that dastard  
rebel crew,  
Nor spoil, nor aught but shame and loss from all their  
toil they drew.

And that same day at evening, a herald came in  
haste,  
And told how Rupert's cavaliers to Lancashire had  
passed ;  
And foremost in that royal band rode Lathom's right-  
ful lord,  
With wrathful looks, and hand that grasped instinc-  
tively his sword ;  
And foremost o'er the rampart breach the Lord of  
Lathom pressed,  
And many a stubborn rebel turned at the sight of  
Lathom's crest ;  
And all through reeking Bolton town and her blood-  
encrimsoned street,  
The sword of Stanley fiercely urged the rebel's wild  
retreat ;  
There were few that cried for quarter and fewer still  
that gave,  
And half of Lathom's leaguering force found there un-  
honoured grave ;  
And for each brave retainer slain for loyal Lathom's  
right,  
A hundred of the rebels fell ere the close of Bolton  
fight.  
A foretaste of the greater siege may Lathom's leaguer  
be,  
And Bolton of the sterner strife we all so soon shall  
see ;  
And may the God of battles give swift issue to our  
war,  
And righteous recompense to York, as to that lady  
fair.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

## AN IRRECONCILABLE REBEL—KNARESBURGH.

BUT, spite of songs and warlike tales,  
The daylight all too slowly fails ;  
Too surely and too soon had ceased  
The joys and interests of the feast,  
For, restless and unschooled to wait  
The hour that comes, nor soon nor late,  
To fit the crisis of our fate,  
The troopers chafe at Rupert's stay,  
In fear to lose the promised fray,  
Deeming that leaguered York is won,  
Or Scottish Leslie homeward flown.  
But now, at sign by Rupert made,  
The dungeon gate is open thrown,  
And slowly from the dismal shade  
Behind the lowering arch of stone  
The guard leads forth a yeoman bound  
With massive chains his limbs around,  
A stalwart form, and yet the light  
Smote him as with a giant's might ;  
Too long in prison gloom immured,  
To scanty space and light inured,  
To him 'tis pain to see the day,  
And feel e'en evening's dying ray ;  
And though his eye shone wild and bright,  
It was not with the sweet sunlight,  
It was not lit by summer sky,  
Nor converse with some secret joy ;  
For dazed he was, as if some scene,  
Bright with intolerable sheen,  
Had passed before his dreamful view,

And he had woke and found it true ;  
And with bowed head and attitude  
Of mute bewilderment he stood.  
Yet, when rude hands his steps did guide,  
And place him high at Rupert's side,  
Where all might see the rebel bold,  
And hear his tale of crimes retold,  
Men only saw the eye of scorn  
He deigned upon that host to turn,  
The fierce defiance of the brave,  
Who nothing ask or care to have,  
Save the last right of failing breath,  
To curse the crowd that hails his death.  
A thrill of anger half repressed,  
A touch of pity half confest  
In simultaneous murmur shewed  
The new-found interest of the crowd ;  
Till a swarth yeoman from the Swale  
Uprose and told the captive's tale.

“ Bold Barnaby Burrowbrig lives by the Ure,  
Where the de'il in his mirth flung his darts on the  
    muir,  
And slyly enjoying his joke, with a grin  
The lord of misrule threw bold Barnaby in.

Oh, Barnaby bold is a roystering wight,  
He frolics by day and he revels by night ;  
And the lasses all know, 'twixt the Ure and the Nidd,  
The reckless careering of Barnaby's steed.

A dozen fat oxen are his on the moor,  
And wethers and gimmers full many a score ;  
But he cares not for beeves, be they ever so prime,  
For there's deer in the forest, though to kill them is  
    crime.

On the parish he's played the stern bishop, in jest  
He disrobed of stole, cassock, and surplice the priest ;  
And, in spite of his threatening penance and loss,  
He has preached at the vicar from Audburrow Cross.

Bold Barnaby loves with his betters to sport,  
He met the lord bishop in haste to the Court,  
He shewed him the ford, where ford there was none,  
And laughed as he left him to get out alone.

Oh, Barnaby bold, the King's men ye deceived,  
Ye promised to lead them where Barnaby lived ;  
With tales ye beguiled them till daylight was o'er,  
And left them to wander all night on the moor.

A rebel at heart, and a Roundhead in speech,  
Naught Barnaby likes in the law but its breach ;  
And parson and squire may threaten and frown ;  
Bold Barnaby cares not for mitre or crown.

While there's ale in the flagon, a stag in the wood,  
A steed in the stall of high mettle and blood,  
He will ride gay and free o'er moor, park, and hill,  
He will feed on the best, let them threaten who will.

Bold Barnaby came with the first to the fair,  
As fearless and fierce as when Fairfax was there ;  
But a yeoman of Scriven stole Barnaby's steed,  
And a troop of king's horse ran him down in the Nidd.

O Barnaby bold—O Barnaby bright,  
Would ye rob a good man, though a king, of his right ?  
Would ye plunder and ravin like rebel or Scot ?  
Would ye give those brave limbs on the ramparts to  
rot ?

Ho, Barnaby bold, there is welcome and cheer,  
A steed and good long-sword, an' thou'lt wear the King's  
gear ;

So, pledge ye the Prince in this right royal liquor,  
We'll forgive thee the deer and forget the good vicar."

The soldier-yeoman's song is done  
In murmurs, as at first begun ;  
Each touch, though rude, of pleasantrie  
Provoked loud shouts of boisterous glee,  
And Nidd in wandering echoes long  
Proclaimed approval of the song.  
But ere the minstrel-soldier ceased,  
Who, more in earnest than in jest,  
(As friend who strives, in aid of friend,  
Some high offence with jokes to mend)  
Told the full truth which many knew,  
Yet still a glamour o'er it threw,  
And charmed the crime of half its ill  
With episodes of strength and skill,  
To lure their vengeful thoughts aside,  
And fling the gate of pardon wide ;  
The hero of the song uprose,  
And glared like lion on his foes ;  
Blanched was his cheek by prison fare  
And dungeon light and dungeon air,  
And blanched his brow, but not with care,  
For naught of hope or fear was there.  
His eye with quenchless anger shone,  
For all were foes it gazed upon ;  
Clenched and defiant, though in pain,  
His hand scarce raised the weight of chain,  
And strove in vain his scorn to throw  
In gestures on the throng below,  
And energize the words, though weak,  
His still unfettered tongue might speak.

“I heed not your welcome, I'll none of your cheer ;  
I'll pledge not the Prince, nor wear the King's gear ;  
A free man I've lived—a free man I'll die,  
Ye may try the rack or the gallows high,  
Ye may nail this head on your castle keep,  
Ye may fling my bones o'er the frowning steep,  
They will sleep in peace if in Nidd they sleep.”

On Rupert's face the sudden frown  
One moment claimed it all her own ;  
One moment flushed his cheek with ire,  
And glowed his eye with kindling fire ;  
But martial instinct claimed her due  
For one so dauntless and so true.  
Sudden as is the ire of youth,  
'Tis e'en as sudden in its ruth,  
And sympathy the heart can melt  
To pity hitherto unfelt  
For him who, fearless, strong, and brave,  
Dares scoff at torture and the grave ;  
And Rupert, rising from the feast,  
The stubborn yeoman thus address.

“Ye are bonnie and bold, my yeoman wight,  
But have ye no love for the free sunlight ?  
Is thy will so strong and thy heart so brave  
That thou hast no shame for a felon's grave ?  
Would ye pine in the gloom with a slow decay ?  
Would ye die at the noon of thy Midsummer's day ?  
Would ye barter life for a stubborn will,  
When Prince Rupert can honour thy courage and skill ?  
And would have ye free as the clouds that ride  
On the reckless wind o'er the moorland wide.  
Then give him thy hand—he will trust the rest—  
And ride in his train with his boldest and best.”

In silence sate each soldier guest,  
Amazed at Rupert's strange request,  
That promised pardon fair and free  
And, all unasked for, liberty,  
With honour more than they could gain  
E'en on the deadliest battle-plain.  
Naught heard the prisoner but command,  
And silent scorned the proffered hand,  
Deeming he read in Rupert's eye  
His fate already more than nigh.  
But Rupert only bade the guard  
To hold their prisoner safe in ward ;  
And when the midnight chimes had rung,  
And Rupert to his seat had sprung,  
Ere he waved "Adieu" to his host's "God-speed,"  
"God speed ye to York, ye are friends indeed,"  
He bade them loose the captive's chain,  
And send him free to his own again,  
When the morrow of morrow's day was done,  
And York relieved or battle won,  
Unfettered by aught of promise or vow ;  
"'Tis Rupert's gift to a dauntless foe."

## CHAPTER XIX.

### THE LEAGUER—YORK.

WITH dripping spur and easy rein  
Bryan urged on his steed amain,  
Till, Marston Heath and Hessay past,  
He deemed the spot secure at last,  
Where, as the village rumours say,  
The greatest of Rome's conquerors lay,



He who had once the world controlled,  
Hid in a tiny urn of gold.  
Here Bryan paused, for dark and high,  
Like shadows on the eastern sky,  
Those glorious towers, that point the road  
From Earth to the All-Holy God,  
Seemed frowning on the hosts beneath,  
And dooming them to dreary death.  
Oft had he seen the westering sun  
On chapetrel and fynial stone,  
Giving e'en things inanimate  
Such semblance of a dreaming state,  
That sculptured forms of saintly mould,  
And flower and leaf engraven bold  
    With Nature's living grace,  
Seemed but to wait, in rapture deep,  
One thrill to dissipate their sleep,  
    And live and leave their place.  
But now they lowered dark and dread,  
As mourners o'er the guilty dead ;  
Transept and tower and pinnacle,  
Portentous, grand, and terrible ;  
No ray of light, no hope was there  
For raisers of intestine war.

Sad thoughts and stern, a wildering train,  
In conflict wrought in Bryan's brain ;  
Tumultuous memories, each and all  
Of peril, pain, and prison thrall,  
Of Janet's wrong and Godfrey's love,  
In simultaneous efforts strove  
With quick vicissitudes of ill  
The momentary calm to fill,  
And still renew, if but in thought,  
The conflicts he so lately fought.

Such strife leaves ever outward trace ;  
Dark was the cloud on Bryan's face ;  
He grasped his brow his thoughts to guide,  
Then clenched his hand and fiercely cried,  
" 'Twas Janet's love that nerved my arm ;  
'Twas Janet saved herself from harm ;  
For Janet's sake I struck the blow ;  
I would have laid a brother low,  
If he had dared, ignobly bold,  
To do such wrong as Ennisgold ;  
It was not sin the wolf to slay,  
And leave secure the lamb to stray ;  
Why was such wrath to Bryan sent ?  
Why was such arm to Bryan lent ?  
If not to shield the weak, to save the innocent."

All fear of swift pursuit is past,  
And Bryan now forgets his haste.  
Before him, scarce a mile at most,  
Lies slumbering all the Scottish host ;  
Stretched on the grassy hill-side bare  
Leaders and men such lodging share,  
Nor deem it ill in summer air.  
Beyond, the battlemented wall  
Rose gray and grim above them all ;  
Oft had it foiled their fathers' greed  
And forced them bootless back to Tweed,  
Or right to English soil had sent  
From turret, tower, and battlement ;  
When mitred chiefs a bow could bend,  
And tonsured priests could armour mend.  
Oft had they tried, in former war,  
The stubborn strength of Bootham Bar,  
Or Micklegate ; as oft recoiled,  
And cursed the meed for which they toiled.

But now they claim a higher Cause ;  
'Tis Scotland, Covenant, and Laws,  
Tempered with wild religious hate  
Of earthly kings and regal state,  
And hope to win themselves a crown  
By tearing tyrants from their throne.

Though human tongues are hushed in sleep,  
And human hearts no Sabbath keep,

But dream of morrow's war ;  
The throstle and the cushat find  
Some early service to their mind  
On woodlands near and far ;  
Service of praise, perchance it be,  
For light and life and liberty.  
Such as it was, the simple strain  
Bade Bryan all his wrath restrain ;  
An omen this of coming peace,  
A token that the war should cease.  
Then anger melted from his look ;  
The gloomy frown his brow forsook.  
True that his love of fight was strong,  
And arm ne'er felt so tight a thong  
As his heart felt the solemn vow,  
To lift no sword 'gainst royal foe ;  
Yet life he owed to Godfrey's love,  
How great the debt his life should prove.

Between the trees a sudden gleam  
Woke Bryan from his fancy's dream ;  
'Twas dawn reflected from the tide,  
Where triremes once were wont to ride,  
And Ouse's waters broad and deep  
In umber pride to ocean sweep.  
Then recollected news recalls  
That Fairfax faced the eastern walls,

With every sturdy yeoman wight  
The Ainsty sent to join the fight.  
Little they knew of Scotland's aims,  
Of kingly rights and Charles's claims ;  
But husbandmen may wield the sword  
For love of right and heavenly Lord.  
And well it were no darker stain  
Should e'er on soldier's hand remain,  
Than stain derived from homely toil,  
By yeoman sons of Yorkshire soil.

A prick of spur, a touch of rein,  
And Bryan passed the trees between ;  
A moment halted on the bank,  
Then sudden struck the bleeding flank.  
Quick plunged the steed in Ouse's tide,  
And bravely sought the further side,  
Freed from his rider's weight, perforce ;  
Though Bryan's hand still guides his course ;  
And Bryan breasts the current strong,  
Scorning to touch e'en stirrup thong ;  
For well he knew the towering bank,  
The treacherous ooze, the rushes dank  
Would try the strength of noblest steed,  
Though he were of the Slingsby breed,  
Ere he could gain the neighbouring mead.  
Not once, nor twice his efforts fail ;  
But hardihood and will prevail,  
And Bryan mounts his steed once more,  
Nor halts until, on Heworth Moor,  
The fiery Fairfax audience gives,  
Asks whence he came and where he lives,  
The news of Rupert, what his force  
Of pikemen, culverins, and horse ;  
Where last they camped, on Skipton side,  
The road they take, how fast they ride ;

That beacon-fire on Knaresburgh's tower,  
Last night at midnight's lonely hour,  
For plundering foray was it meant,  
Or was some higher message sent ?  
Little could Bryan tell of news,  
Save that some troopers neared the Ouse  
Last night, but whether scouting band,  
Or Rupert's self in full command,  
Naught knew he. Then the tale he told  
Of Janet wronged by Ennisgold,  
The struggle fierce, the fatal deed,  
Her midnight flight o'er marsh and mead,  
His own wild race—the trembling steed  
Bore witness to his headlong speed—  
“Where Ure and Swale their streams unite,  
And one small burn holds Ouse's might,  
There Ouseburne named my sires of yore,  
And Bryan bears the name they bore.  
That name was in thy troop enrolled  
When erst we fought on Newburn wold,  
And Tynedale echoed with the cry  
Of Loudoun charging valiantly.  
There, last to quit the shameful fight,  
Thy Yorkshire horse did save the flight ;  
And if scant honour there was earned  
A soldier's lesson Ouseburne learned,  
To bear defeat, nor deem it vain  
To trust in Fortune's smile again.  
Strong still this arm to wield a sword,  
For Commonweal at Fairfax's word,  
But ”—and the colour filled his cheek—  
“My plighted word I dare not break ;  
Borne down in skirmish, captive ta'en,  
I promised ne'er to fight again,  
And parole gave, for gift of life  
In dungeon drear, to shun the strife.”

"Little of use thy trooper's sword,  
If thou hast pledged a soldier's word ;  
Little of use that arm will be,  
If thou hast sold thy liberty ;  
But thou hast done a soldier's work,  
And still may feast with us in York,  
If Heworth Moor and summer skies  
Afford fit lodging in thine eyes.  
If thou couldst quench thy martial flame,  
Nor join the fight if near it came,  
If thou couldst scorn thy comrades' jest,  
I'd bid thee stay and take thy rest ;  
'Tis Honour's death to strike a blow,  
Keep thou thy promise—stay or go."

'Twas all he wished or thought to ask,  
To doff in camp his soldier's caske ;  
To lay his sword and harness by,  
And live unarmed, nay, even fly,  
If battle rage on Heworth soil,  
Or sortie fierce the leaguer spoil.  
In simple words his thanks he paid  
To Fairfax for his generous aid,  
Then took the rein and slowly led  
To the bleak moor his weary steed.

But much he mused as on he went,  
And firmer grew his strong intent ;  
"If fighting Fairfax holds it right  
To keep my word, and shun the fight,  
No mortal power this arm shall raise ;  
No comrade's tongue shall Bryan praise  
For valiant deed ; e'en friend distress  
Shall ne'er draw Bryan's sword from rest.

Soon end the war, as end it may,  
But promise broke is broke for aye."

And now the moor before him lies,  
And now in glad, unfeigned surprise,  
With joyous shout and boisterous mirth  
Welcomed their comrade in the North  
The yeoman troopers from the Nidd  
And Wharfe from Cawood to the Strid.  
There, Bolton, stand thy ruins gray  
'Mid spreading lawns and meadows gay,  
And Austin monks in early days  
Lifted to heaven their chaunt of praise ;  
'Twas hither came at break of morn  
Young Romilly with hound and horn,  
And loud thy woods, from crest to base,  
Rung with the clamour of the chase ;  
And, far below, the struggling tide  
Of Wharfe in hoarser tones replied.  
By noon the echoing chase was o'er,  
And louder rose Wharfe's warning roar.

Come not near, oh, come not near,  
Life is joy, and death is here ;

Come not near ;

Come not near, oh, come not near,  
Life is Light, and Night is here ;

Come not near.

By thy lonely mother's fears,

By her solitary tears,

Come not near.

Wharfe would bid thee fly, and never

Tread his banks for aye and ever ;

Come not near.



Hark !—a widow's tears are falling,  
Hark !—a mother's cry appalling,

“Come not near.”

Linger, linger, but in fear,  
List, oh, list, but come not near,

“Come not near.”

Wouldst thou in my caverns sleep,  
Lie in darkness chill and deep?  
Come then near, and dare to leap.

Again he came ;—a hound untrained,  
The stripling in the leash restrained ;  
Light on the wave-worn rock he leapt  
To take the leap so often leapt ;  
One careless bound—the timorous brute  
Hung from the spring irresolute—  
And, far beneath the caverned bank,  
For hours, ere yet his corse had sank,  
In unseen whirlpools idly tost,  
By hideous arches over-croft,  
Skipton, thy youthful lord was lost.  
And long in Bolton's abbey fair,  
The holy men with bead and prayer,  
For Romilly so young and brave,  
For rest of soul and mercy crave ;  
And oft at eve their steps would trace  
With pious reverence to the place,  
And gaze with sad and tearful eye,  
When Wharfe his restless breast heaved high.  
Still longer have the striplings tried  
The leap where Romilly leaped and died ;  
And cast the bracken sheaf or bough,  
Where narrowest ran the stream below,  
And maddest was Wharfe's frantic throe ;  
And seemed to see Lord Romilly's corse  
Whirling in eddies, wild and hoarse ;



Now on the surface tost and near,  
Now swift as arrow disappear,  
Now struggling in some monster's clasp,  
Now flying from his ghostly grasp,  
Till, for an hour unseen, at last  
The wreck on Bolton's marge is cast.  
And still the stranger feels the spell,  
When village swains the story tell,  
And point to Barden's castled fell;  
Not all-unhallowed is the spot,  
Nor Romilly's sad tale forgot.

Fair Nidd, thy banks are sad and still;  
No song is heard on moor or hill;  
Echoes no strain thy cliffs between,  
Nor urchin's shout from village green.  
On Ripley meads, at close of day,  
The wild deer from the forest stray,  
And in the sacred porch may find  
Safe shelter from the shower and wind;  
The timid hare may sleep in peace,  
'Mongst mouldering tombs her terrors cease;  
The heron slumbers 'neath the bridge,  
The moor game leaves the distant ridge,  
And in thy orchards rears her brood,  
Unconscious of her hardihood.  
No angler's foot pollutes thy stream,  
No lure disturbs the troutlet's dream,  
No voice upon the silence falls,  
No baying hound the pate appals;  
E'en dawn scarce warns him to his den,  
To sleep secure from hostile ken;  
And lonely housewives of the dale  
His predatory skill bewail.  
By Knaresburgh's castle, old and hoar,  
From Monckton on to Middlesmoor,

Upon thy breeze no joy-notes swell  
From festival or wedding bell,  
Only the burial and the passing knell.  
Rusted is ploughshare, scythe, and bill ;  
The team ox wanders at his will,  
Forgetful of the yoke and goad,  
Forgetful of the hated road ;  
For level ing and upland field  
This year no fragrant load shall yield ;  
Thy sons have sought far other work,  
And joined the leaguering host at York,  
Unmindful of young Slingsby's claims,  
Or orders Ingilby proclaims.  
Little they recked of squire or knight ;  
They heard of war and joined the fight.

## CHAPTER XX.

## THE LAST SUNDAY OF THE SIEGE—YORK.

OLD comrades now round Bryan throng ;  
War's friendships make a greeting strong ;  
Rough hands grasp his, then off they tear  
And fling the gauntlet high in air ;  
Unclasp the chain and doff the caske,  
While twenty tongues their questions ask.  
Where was his latest skirmish fought ?  
What news of Rupert had he brought ?  
Who, in the villages he knew,  
Were waiting for his murderous crew ?  
Guy Dayrell, was he still at large ?  
Was Knaresburgh in young Slingsby's charge ?

For naught they feared for wife or child,  
If Slingsby led those troopers wild.  
No ruined homesteads, scarred and black,  
Would Slingsby leave upon his track ;  
Fair soldier's fight would Slingsby seek,  
Not warfare with the old and weak.  
Oft had they prayed some high command  
Might fall to Slingsby's generous hand.

The siege, they say, is well-nigh done,  
And York's stern rampart all but won ;  
This week will see the city fall,  
For breached are postern, bar, and wall ;  
The Scots have lodgment made of late,  
Upon the slope at Micklegate ;  
And Fairfax, certain of the game,  
Had sworn to hang in felon shame,  
Whoe'er should aim the cannon wide,  
And wound the minster's sacred pride.  
Anon, they tell of comrades' share  
In the rough incidents of war ;  
And all the leaguer's deeds recount  
From Mary's Tower to Bishops-mount ;  
The mine, by Crawford's order sprung,  
While all was still and calm,  
Save that the minster's arches rung  
With morning chaunt and psalm.  
By fierce assault and headlong rush,  
Through orchard, bowling green, and bush,  
The manor wall they gain ;  
Right bravely was the passage won,  
And well they deem their work is done,  
They'll feast in York ere set of sun,  
And spoil the foeman slain ;  
When, lo, concealed by slope of ground,  
Unheralded, by martial sound,

Behind the ruined abbey gray,  
With glittering casques and doublets gay,  
A thousand whitecoats come.  
Level their pikes, their rapiers flash,  
Behind the waning strife they dash,  
And charge the Roundheads home.  
Hemmed in, cut off from hope of aid,  
Save in their own good pike and blade,  
A gallant stand they make ;  
Undaunted take the deadly blow,  
Or lay the venturous foeman low,  
That strives their line to break.  
But thronging foes increased the fight,  
And feller grew the hideous sight  
That holy ground displayed,  
As louder rose the shriek and cry,  
Where, writhing in their agony,  
The stricken fall, despair, and die  
Beneath the victor's blade.  
As surges wild sweep o'er the deck,  
And leave the stranded bark a wreck,  
So swept the whitecoats on,  
Nor paused in their triumphant course  
O'er battered helm and mangled corse,  
Till by the manor's wall of stone  
The foremost fighters stand alone,  
And thousand voices, wild and hoarse,  
Proclaim the conflict done.

Oh, terrible it was and dread,  
To list in silence as they bled  
On that bright Sabbath morn,  
Snared in the toils, like wounded bear  
That grimly strives, though in despair,  
And dies in fight forlorn.

Within, no minster chaunt rose high,  
Without, no shout nor battle cry .

Told of the coming aid ;  
With ear attent and whispers low,  
Men marked the dismal sounds of woe,  
That from those sacred precincts flow,  
And prayer in silence said.

And then came curses loud and deep,  
And vows some future field to steep  
In torrent streams of blood ;  
Oh, well shall Rupert rue the day,  
When men like these their vows shall pay,  
And in fair field their stern array  
Bursts on him as a flood.

And often since that fatal morn,  
The soldier on the walls in scorn  
Thus chides our foremost post,  
" Who scaled the orchard wall so well,  
But in the warden's clutches fell,  
And found him churlish host ;  
The fruit, I warrant, grew too high,  
But sweetest fruit grows next the sky,  
And so the prize was lost."

In accents sad and gentler tone,  
While many a tear on eyelids shone,  
Tears for the living, not the dead,  
Wife, orphan child, and plighted maid,  
Each slowly tells of comrade's loss  
In trench or ambushade or fosse,  
Killed by the bomb at random sent,  
Or shot from bar or battlement,  
In sortie fierce borne down and slain,  
When hundreds fought with guard of ten.

As bursts the pack, at dawn of day,  
In silence through the covert gray,

And scares from sleep the wily prey,  
That starts, and wakes, and dies ;  
So burst Newcastle's vengeful crew  
Ere peep of dawn Monk's gateway through,  
And rampart, mound, and parapet  
Strewed with the sleeping guards beset,  
And slain in wild surprise.  
But rallying troops the combat join,  
Pikemen and musketeers in line  
With cuirassiers to charge combine,  
And force the sortie back.  
It came as fierce as ocean flood,  
By some projecting rock withstood,  
As angrily it died away,  
Leaving behind a bloody spray,  
To mark its direful track.

And now they tell of lighter war,  
And scouting foray, near and far,  
Of reckless raids by day or night,  
And wounds received in single fight,  
When blade met blade, and skill and might  
Determined swift 'twixt wrong and right,  
And laid the traitor low ;  
Then draw the dinted sword from sheath,  
And silent shew the sign of death,  
And touch where fell the blow ;  
While many a scar, with pride displayed,  
Tells how the rapier's thrust was stayed,  
Or ball from fiery petronel,  
Not unexhausted, harmless fell.  
To 'scape such chance were proof indeed,  
That God through victory would lead  
Their cause to issue good.  
Oh, well may peer, and squire, and knight,  
Secure in York, avoid the fight,  
Nor meet them in such mood ;

E'en rampart, bar, and battlement,  
Serve but to energize intent  
    To buy success with blood.  
Fair York, ere Sabbath morn shall break,  
In terror shall thy burghers wake,  
Ten thousand foes assault shall make,  
Ten thousand hurrying footsteps shake  
    Thy walls with vengeful tread ;  
And all thine ancient gates along  
Shall roll the strife in current strong,  
Till cries of thy disordered rout,  
Blended with victors' louder shout,  
    Shall die in echoes dread.

While troopers thus their deeds relate,  
And coming strife anticipate ;  
No warlike sound the air profanes,  
No cannon smoke the azure stains,  
No angry cry the stillness rends,  
No shout the Sabbath peace offends ;  
Such silence holds the leaguering host  
From bivouac to vantage post,  
As when Assyria's king awoke  
Alone beneath the angel's stroke ;  
And all Assyria's pride lay there,  
Turning to heaven a ghastly stare,  
    Mute, motionless, and still ;  
Nor princely chief, nor captive slave  
To stern command an answer gave,  
    Or moved to do his will.  
Still and serene, the minster throws  
An air of peace on friends and foes ;  
Oh, would such peace were peace indeed,  
And Heaven with angry men would plead  
    In accents firm and calm ;

Would that in yonder beechen shade,  
Some prayer less pitiless were prayed,  
And sung less ruthless psalm.  
Oh, that young Freedom's faltering tread  
Were not o'er heaps of mangled dead,  
Nor stained her garment fair ;  
And Liberty, thy pinion white  
Would wave o'er scenes of peace and light ;  
Not o'er the lurid glow of fight,  
Nor homesteads blazing wildly bright  
Upon the midnight air.  
The hallowed day its calm repose  
In pity cast on friends and foes,  
And drew their thoughts to Heaven ;  
So flowers turn up to cloudless skies  
The sweet soft look of loving eyes,  
When sultrier grows the summer air,  
And unseen storms their wrath prepare  
Behind the hills in columns black,  
And murmurs mark the lurid track  
The angry bolt has riven.

And now the sun a gentler ray  
Throws on the face of dying day ;  
And Bryan's thoughts a gentler tone  
Take from the scene they dwell upon,  
While the soft evening's tender grace  
Dissolves the shadows from his face,  
As, all alone, his steps he bent  
To scan the wall and battlement ;  
And see ere war should wake anew  
The scenes his eager fancy drew ;  
And reach the leaguer's foremost bound,  
Where parapet and rampart wound  
Within their toils the city round.



Five furlongs from the city wall  
A mound told of huge burial ;  
And trampled turf and bloody stain  
Shewed where war's tide had flowed amain,  
Recoiled and flowed and ebb'd again.  
Here surged the sortie's foremost war,  
And two pale lines the herbage mar,  
    With verdant space between ;  
For one long hour, pike, lance, and blade,  
A glittering archway, o'er it played ;  
The furious onset here delayed ;  
The reckless footstep here was stayed ;  
    'Twas sacred ground, I ween.

Here, where the sortie's force was spent,  
Did Bryan pause with eye intent ;  
While the fierce spirit of the place  
Glowed fitful in his changing face.  
But flush and frown soon passed away,  
And sadness holds her rightful sway ;  
The boldest e'en will hold his breath  
In the still company of death,  
    And own him conqueror ;  
Victor and vanquished thought of fame,  
And played to win a prizeless game,  
And won, at best, a blood-gilt name,  
    A name—what is it more ?  
It is not those in battle lost,  
Who say the prize was worth the cost,  
    Or feel the victor's pride.  
The dead a different tale would tell,  
If the stern truth their lips could spell ;  
Victor and vanquished, all who fell,  
    Were on the losing side.  
So vividly on Bryan crowd  
These thoughts—they seemed to speak aloud,  
    And warn him from the strife.

Less bold a spirit fear had felt,  
Perchance had prayed, perchance had knelt,  
In thankfulness for life ;  
But Bryan's brow with anger flushed,  
The rising sigh was rudely hushed,  
The tear that on his eyelid shone  
Melted as dewdrop in the sun,  
So fiercely glowed his eye with shame  
That thoughts like these his heart should tame ;  
Or fear of death unnerve his hand,  
When Freedom bade to wield the brand.  
To know, to feel he was not free  
To join in War's wild revelry  
From Bryan's memory was torn  
For one brief moment by his scorn.

## CHAPTER XXI.

## IMPORTANT NEWS—YORK.

BUT sound of hoofs the stillness broke,  
And Bryan to himself awoke,  
And in surprise his scorn forgot ;  
For, scarce a stone's cast from the spot,  
With whip and spur to utmost speed  
A horseman urged his reeling steed.  
Save where the stroke his flank laid bare  
Bryan could see no colour there ;  
The foam and dust so thickly lay  
He could not say 'twas black or gray.  
Dripping his flank from crimson stain,  
With nostril wide and swollen vein,

His drooping head could feel no rein,  
 He seemed to feel—he felt no pain ;  
 Instinctive on his course he held,  
 Nor prick nor stroke his speed impelled ;  
 His willing heart and sturdy limb  
 Survived, though consciousness was dim.  
 'Tis his last race, and nobly run,  
 Strength, courage, will are all but gone,  
 Had either left his task half done,  
 No Marston Moor had e'er been won.

Aside three paces Bryan strode,  
 Nor turned the horseman from his road ;  
 The stranger raised his hand and made  
 Secret fraternal sign and said :  
 "Rupert is near, the morrow's light  
 Will bring his cavaliers in sight."  
 Wild was his look, his accents hoarse,  
 He swerved not—paused not in his course ;  
 So near he passed where Bryan stood,  
 His cheek was splashed with foam and blood,  
 For with such thrilling news of weight  
 Guy Dayrell rode precipitate ;  
 Nor paused till on the nearer bank  
 Of Foss his steed beneath him sank ;  
 And drooping ear and eyeball dim,  
 And rigour stiffening every limb,  
 Told Dayrell he would rise no more,  
 His last and direst race was o'er.

No useless grief Guy Dayrell spent,  
 Nor tear nor sigh bespoke lament ;  
 His useless sword he left in sheath ;  
 His pistols lay on Goldsbrough heath,  
 Flung, as a broken toy aside,  
 And worthless in such desperate ride,

When last their deadly knell had rung,  
And foemen closest on him clung.  
Just as he fell the steed was found  
Next eve, when Rupert scoured the ground,  
And told why Fairfax crossed the Ouse,  
How Leven had mista'en the news,  
And thought, "Prince Rupert leads his force  
From Knaresburgh by directest course."

Free from his steed his foot he flung,  
And half across the stream he sprung;  
He cursed the ooze that held him back,  
He crushed the tall reeds in his track,  
He gained the bank—one hurried shake,  
The while he marked the course to take,  
Then to his utmost speed he bent,  
And breathless reached the bannered tent;  
Where Fairfax coned the sacred page  
With the keen scrutiny of a sage.  
His eye for ancient sieges sought,  
And for what price each prize was bought;  
Marked how Religion skill had given,  
And forethought gained the meed of Heaven;  
Valour uncertain paths had trod,  
And fortitude in honour stood,  
And won the longed-for praise of iron men of God.

Guy Dayrell strove his tale to tell,  
But muttered not one syllable;  
By some strange spell his tongue seemed bound,  
His lips to move, yet give no sound;  
His bloodshot eye, dishevelled hair  
And gesture wild bespeak despair,  
For news so high and terrible  
His stubborn tongue refused to tell.

Fairfax could scarce his wrath restrain,  
 He asked for news, but asked in vain ;  
 Was Dayrell then of sense despoiled ?  
 His doublet, why blood-stained and soiled ?  
 Had foray proved unfortunate,  
 Had peril marred his mind's estate,  
 Wounds made him inarticulate ?  
 Glowed Dayrell's eye with fiercer fire ;  
 Quivered his frame with kindling ire ;  
 The rising storm his silence broke,  
 And from its spell his tongue awoke.  
 "Rupert is near, he travels fast ;"  
 Leapt Fairfax to his feet in haste.  
 "Rupert is near, who told thee so ?"  
 "I left him scarce two hours ago  
 Crossing the Nidd with all his force,  
 Ten thousand foot—ten thousand horse.  
 At dawn on scouting foray bound,  
 By Wharfe I heard his clarion sound,  
 And, hid in woodland shadows deep,  
 I saw his squadrons downward sweep,  
 Ten thousand chargers prancing light,  
 Ten thousand helmets gleaming bright,  
 Never, I ween, a goodlier sight  
     Shall Wharfedale's pastures shew ;  
 But when the rearmost troop had passed,  
 Across the moor I rode in haste  
     To intercept the foe,  
 And at the ford in Crimple Vale,  
 In yeoman guise, with aspect pale,  
 Service to offer as their guide,  
 And see which way, how fast they ride,  
     And their fell purpose know."

"Their van I met in Crimple Vale,  
 With trembling limbs and aspect pale ;

Half dumb with terror scarce could ride,  
Mumbled, I knew the country side,  
And, if they'd spare my life and steed,  
Would be their guide to Brig of Nidd.  
In jest they asked if ague shook  
My gallant limbs and colour took  
From my brave face, or speech had lost  
Through communing with doleful ghost.  
But soon as free as they I ride,  
And interest lend the country side ;  
A hundred episodes relate,  
Which Fancy framed to suit my state,  
Of robbers hung in iron chains,  
And murderers tracked by bloody stains ;  
Of headless ghosts that wail and weep,  
And fright the villagers from sleep ;  
Of mighty stags that scorned to fly,  
And turned and fought the hounds in cry,  
Then vanished in a moment's space,  
While laughter mocked the 'wildered chase.  
With mirth and scorn they chide my tales ;  
But chiefly merriment prevails,  
And many a joke, though wildly aimed,  
A comrade's shout or laughter claimed ;  
Prince Rupert would his revels keep  
This night on Knaresburgh's castled steep,  
The morrow's noon the leaguer spoil,  
And cheat the Roundheads of their toil ;  
Leven should rue his traitorous pains,  
The hungry Scot should hang in chains ;  
And Fairfax grin on Bootham Bar  
To fright the malcontents from war.  
It was, they said, right royal work  
To bear relief to leaguered York.

" With foresight, ere I met the foe,  
I bade Mark Kirkby forward go,

And wait by Nidd with swiftest steed,  
To succour lend in case of need.  
And when we reached the Brig o' Nidd,  
My steed with furtive spur I chid,  
And sidelong to the wall I drew,  
And saw beneath my henchman true ;  
Then as the castle's cannon flung  
Their welcome to the Prince, I sprung ;  
One bound has cleared the parapet,  
The next has gained the saddle seat ;  
My spurs struck deep, the maddened steed  
Like lightning flew along the mead ;  
Hemmed in 'twixt cliff and river bed,  
On swifter race I never sped.  
Though fast we flew, the breezes bore  
Loud echoes of the cannon's roar ;  
And, louder still, with curses wild,  
Guy Dayrell's name the valley thrilled.  
A hundred swords, like lightning flashed,  
'Twas all I saw as on I dashed  
Beneath Saint Robert's cavern shrine,  
Where ghostly light was wont to shine  
On crucifix and altar stone,  
And round the head of Holy John ;  
Then past the ruined abbey gate,  
Like frightened deer precipitate.  
We gained the bridge, its arches rang  
With thunders from our iron clang ;  
Behind us down the hill-side stream,  
Like hounds in cry, their swords agleam,  
A hundred furious troopers, bent,  
To make amends for merriment.  
As thus in headlong race we ride,  
I drew Mark Kirkby to my side,  
'Keep thou the road, and do thy best  
To 'scape with life from Rupert's quest ;



Then ride to York with utmost speed,  
Tell Fairfax Rupert's reached the Nidd.  
More swiftly on his course he pressed,  
While I drew rein, as if to rest ;  
Behind, the chase more wildly surged,  
As slowly down the bank I urged  
My steed, where shingle chokes the stream,  
And ripples on the shallows gleam.  
Wilder and worse the clamour flowed,  
As slowly up the bank I rode ;  
I gained the mead, the impetuous throng  
Had reached the bank, their arms unslung ;  
I heard their muskets vengeful ring,  
I heard their angry bullets sing,  
I heard the furious waters splash,  
As troopers through the current dash ;  
But naught I feared, I knew my steed  
Would fail me not in hour of need ;  
When to his utmost speed he bent,  
I knew no foe save accident.

“On Goldsborough moor two troopers pressed  
And forced my charger to his best,  
Their rapiers laid for instant push,  
I swerved and baulked them of their rush ;  
My pistol laid the first to rest,  
I clave his comrade to the chest ;  
Such sight might warn the tardy crew  
Guy Dayrell's eye and hand were true ;  
Such sight might chill less fiery blood,  
It roused them to more vengeful mood,  
And spurred them to a wilder haste,  
As hungry wolves on Russian waste  
Dart fiercer on the flying prize,  
Heedless of comrades' agonies ;



And through Mauleverer's wide domain  
Hunters and hunted swept amain.  
Never, I ween, a furlong's space  
Parted the hunters from their chase ;  
Nor deemed they that the prize was lost  
Until once more the Nidd was crossed ;  
Died then their shout in sullen tone :  
On Hessay Moor I rode alone,  
Nor checked my pace, I knew my news  
Must force our army from the Ouse,  
Should Leven fail, with hope forlorn,  
To win the breach ere morrow's morn."

## CHAPTER XXII.

## THE MIDNIGHT RETREAT—YORK.

SILENT and stern was Fairfax now ;  
The shadow darkened on his brow ;  
The fiery eye his thoughts betrayed,  
Flashing from swarthy eyebrow's shade :  
Like star through storm-cloud pierced and riven,  
When gathers black the wrath of heaven.  
Wasted was all their blood and toil,  
If Rupert should the leaguer spoil,  
Or stubborn Leven hesitate  
To make assault on Micklegate,  
At break of dawn, and win the wall,  
Ere Rupert on his rear could fall.  
Such thoughts could find no utterance,  
Save in his fierce eye's kindling glance ;  
One moment, motionless and still,  
He stood, as doubting of his will ;

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The next, in accents stern and slow,  
He bade young Stockdale, "Swiftly go,  
Summon the captain of the guard ;  
See all for midnight strife prepared ;  
Order the troops to stand to arms,  
And silent wait the foe's alarms ;  
Move not one step from bivouac ground,  
Till loud thou hear'st my trumpet sound ;  
Tell them on silence all depends,  
Fairfax himself the message sends."

Then to Guy Dayrell, when alone,  
"Tis time, good friend, that we were gone  
Leven and Manchester must know  
Thy story, as thou told'st it now ;  
Some weighty change must Leven make,  
Ere dawn and Rupert on us break ;  
God give us guidance in our strait,  
And, if it please Him, Micklegate."  
In silent and in thoughtful mood  
Fairfax and Dayrell swiftly strode  
Into the darkness of the night,  
And past the flickering watchfires' light.  
They heard the guard upon the wall  
The hour of midnight faintly call ;  
They heard his scornful questioning,  
And the loud musket's answering ring.  
They gained the rough-hewn beams that  
The sluggish stream of sullen Foss ;  
And, silent still, with swifter speed  
They passed the intervening mead,  
Where, glimmering pale, the sortie's track  
Loomed ghostly from the herbage black ;  
And reached at length the Northern road  
Where proud Earl Manchester abode.

It boots not now to paint the scene  
Fairfax and stubborn Scot between,  
When Dayrell's tale the leaders knew,  
And Dayrell to the porch withdrew ;  
How Fairfax urged the Scot in vain  
Instant assault to make and gain  
    The shattered wall and bar ;  
Or tardy Leven cursed the fate  
That led him from the northern state  
    To join in England's war.  
Their vote is cast ; 'tis not for fight,  
But secret countermarch by night  
    To gain the western bank,  
The army throw athwart the road,  
By which Prince Rupert's squadrons rode,  
And strike the instant that he shewed  
    Centre or wing or flank.  
If Rupert's musketeers were stayed,  
Where sinuous Nidd their march delayed,  
Some vantage would the moor afford  
For lance's thrust or play of sword ;  
And Wilstrop would our squadrons hide,  
If Rupert gained Nidd's southern side,  
Whence Cromwell on his vaward wing,  
Or Fairfax on his rear might spring.

It had not chimed the hour of one,  
Ere all were from the council gone ;  
And hurrying feet with muffled tread  
To trench and bivouac swiftly sped,  
And order passed with bated breath ;  
" Stand all to arms, be still as death,  
Ready to march when culverin  
And saker from the front came in  
To Bishopsthorpe and Poppleton,  
And cross the Ouse ere night be done."

Like shadowy army of the dead,  
Uprose in silence from their bed  
On heath and stray and rampart mound  
The embattled leaguer's circle round,  
Trooper and musketeer in haste,  
As on the message swiftly passed ;  
And fast they formed in dark array,  
With caske and breastplate glimmering gray,  
And shouldered pike and sheathed blade,  
Pennon and lance in stirrup stayed,  
And falconet for march arrayed.

So wake, 'tis said, the fallen brave  
At midnight from their honoured grave,  
And form their ranks for war,  
As, on the battle-field arrayed,  
Grim, motionless, and unaffrayed,  
Beneath the morning star  
They stood, resolved ere close of day,  
The price of victory to pay  
In torrent streams of blood ;  
And shield their land from ruthless foes,  
Whose ranks illimitably rose  
Upon her like a flood.  
Unseen by mortal eye, they trace  
The victory on their leader's face,  
And mark his dauntlessness of pace,  
As down the ranks he rode ;  
Unheard by mortal ear they note  
The triumph in his trumpet's throat,  
The neigh of his exultant steed,  
The stirring notes that bid them bleed  
For native land and God.  
So, moving like the spectre host  
Of patriots in battle lost,

In silence grim and terrible,  
As touched by some mysterious spell,  
Each to his rank in order fell ;  
And stood in mute expectancy,  
With ear attent and wakeful eye,  
And hand that trembled on the blade,  
And lips that left the curse unsaid.

Not long they stood with ranks arrayed,  
Not long their secret march was stayed  
Ere ceased the distant cannonade,  
And sullen tramp and muffled din  
Told of retreating culverin.  
Then waked to life that phalanx grim,  
And silent moved each spectre dim,  
Each following, as his comrade strode,  
The path his glimmering harness shewed.  
Save for the clanging bridle chain  
Of steeds that tossed their heads in vain,  
Or steel-clad pike by accident  
Against a neighbouring pikeshaft leant,  
No sound of arms the march betrayed,  
Or told in York the foe had fled.  
To scornful cry from battlement  
No answer now the musket sent ;  
Yet knew not York the siege was o'er,  
But deemed some ambushment in store,  
Or mine by fiery Fairfax sprung,  
And fierce assault on Walmgate flung.

So, for the coming strife they wait  
With marshalled pikes within the gate,  
While musketeers their ladders crowd  
Where roof or tower advantage shewed ;  
Each lattice, bright by armour made,  
Betrayed the tiny ambushade ;

Tyneside and Borderman were there,  
With hardy sons of Tees and Wear,  
Summoned to shield, in headlong haste,  
Their lands from Scottish war and waste,  
And drive the ancestral foeman back  
To Scotland's mists and forests black.  
While Glemham's eye their order ruled,  
Eythin their charge full loudly schooled,  
And strove to fire the zeal the loitering hours had  
cooled.  
Though night still lingered overhead,  
Dawn tinged the distant wold with red,  
When loud there rose the cry, "The foe is fled, is  
fled."  
The watchfires faded on the Stray,  
And died in dawn's returning ray;  
So faded and so died the leaguering force away.

## CHAPTER XXIII.

## DISAPPOINTMENT—MONKTON.

'Tis noon; on Marston's shimmering heath  
The leaguering hosts have taken breath,  
And drawn their marshalled ranks' array  
To bar Prince Rupert's Yorkward way,  
Where gives the plain an equal chance  
To Roundhead sword or royal lance,  
To push o'er scant and dwarfed broom  
Their thundering charge right surely home.  
And equal chance would pikemen share  
On ground so free, so firm, so bare,  
If Fairfax let them marshal there,

Nor struck with sudden onslaught bold  
Ere from the bridge their line unrolled,  
And spread each wing for instant fight,  
As eagle, startled into flight  
By lurking snare or ambushed foe,  
Darts from the precipice's brow.  
From Monkton tower to Wilstrop wood  
The ordered ranks of battle stood,  
Chafing at Rupert's strange delay ;  
Twas Rupert's wont to seek the fray,  
Nor waste one hour in ease of summer's generous  
day.

Long did they watch, but watch in vain,  
The western slope, where ends the plain,  
For coronet or pennon white  
Or lances' clustered spangles bright  
Or banner proudly reared ;  
Against the sky the team-ox shewed,  
A waggon lumbered on the road,  
But naught of war appeared.  
Hope's promise failed ;—deep weariness,  
Like opiate's subtle drowsiness,  
Dissolves their aspect stern ;  
Rank after rank their order break,  
And hurried rest instinctive seek  
On heather, turf, or fern.  
Each soldier, stretched in sudden sleep,  
So near was laid, one hurried leap  
Would find him at his post ;  
Clenched was the sword within his grasp,  
Tight was the gorge and morion's clasp,  
Pouldron and tace and breast-plate thong,  
Buckled for fight by yeoman strong  
At dawn when Ouse was crossed,

Tinged his deep sleep with sense of pain  
And conflict wearisome and vain

With undiscerned foes,  
That came, as mists through forests deep  
From tree to tree in silence creep ;  
Like mists, they wrapped his limbs around  
With sense of bondage and of wound,

Like mist received his blows.  
And some there were who felt the pain  
Of royal dungeon's ruthless chain  
That left on heart and limb the stain,

The undying stain of wrong ;  
Who tossed and strove, with might and main  
In sleep, their freedom to regain,

And upright fiercely sprung.  
But sun and sky and heath and air,  
And Freedom's sights and sounds so fair  
And dear to men of yeoman state  
Their dreams deceitful dissipate,

And calm their wrathful mood.  
God save us from such nightmare thrall,  
E'en dream of dungeon chain or wall

Will madden yeoman blood,  
And nerve the arm and guide the blow,  
To lay the shrieking suppliant low,  
That late in battle stood.

But now returning scouts declare  
Rupert has shunned the Roundhead snare,  
And northward passed the Ure,  
Where Burghbridge throws its timbers brown  
O'er umber torrents rushing down

From Wensley's gloomy muir.  
'Twas here, ill omen of the war,  
Sunk Freedom's boldest, brightest star,  
When Lancaster was ta'en,



And Bohun brave, by lurking spear  
'Twixt rafters thrust, in full career  
With Bernéfeld was slain.

A darker doom than yeoman steel  
Waited De Mowbray, Clyfford, Lisle,  
And all those sturdy baronies  
That pillared England's liberties  
In council or in field,  
And dared, the dauntless in the land,  
Alone for Commonweal to stand,  
Alone her sword to wield.  
Such arms might turn War's tide again  
On Scottish moor or Border plain,  
And vengeance wreak for Bannockburn ;  
But civil strife alone survives  
And foully on her ruin thrives,  
Lives England but to mourn.

That bridge, where England's hope was lost,  
At dawn Prince Rupert's troopers crossed ;  
By six, so ran the uncertain tale,  
They gained the eastern bank of Swale ;  
Musket and pike at noon were seen  
Piled in short halt on Huby Green ;  
And now through Galtrees' forest deep,  
In lengthened files, their squadrons creep.  
E'en now from minster tower and spire  
Rings out, " God save good Lancashire,  
White rose and red well met ;  
Rupert, well done, thy gallant speed  
Has saved fair York, by Scottish greed  
And rebel host beset."  
Such joy is there, as when, I wot,  
De Melton foiled marauding Scot,

And Douglas stout and Randolf hot  
Their faces homeward set.  
And hark, upon the southern gale  
Deep thunders tell the unvarying tale  
Of wasted hope and toil ;  
And starts each soldier at the sound,  
One moment leans him on the ground,  
One moment lists like startled hound  
Stayed by low growl in act to bound,  
When lions seize the spoil.  
Some spring a spear's length in their haste,  
Some leap the line's new order past,  
But all their ranks regain ;  
More tightly each the weapon grasped  
His hand in restless dreams had clasped,  
And stood full-armed again.

'Twas Dayrell's lips that told the news,  
'Twas Dayrell's steed that swam the Ouse,  
'Twas Dayrell spied the royal wing  
Break through the mist on Myton ing,  
'Twas Dayrell heard their harness clang  
As through Alne beck their chargers sprang,  
'Twas Dayrell hovered on their flank,  
Their squadrons told, their depth of rank,  
As, narrowing in the forest's throat,  
They gaily passed from ken and note ;  
Then turned, nor checked his willing steed,  
Re-swam the Ouse at Monkton mead,  
And safe regained the banks of Nidd.

Of all that stern and warlike host,  
That cursed the hope of battle lost,  
Bryan alone with shaded eye  
Had scanned the margin of the sky,

Since morn, in anguish, doubt, and dread,  
Where o'er the hill the roadway led,  
And gabled roof and lattice sheen  
Framed in an ambushment of green,  
And coted barn and glittering vane  
Revived his boyhood's days again,  
And shewed to his untiring sight  
The refuge of his Janet's flight.  
What if War's tide should surge around  
That more to him than sacred ground,  
And Rupert seize the peaceful farm  
For vantage post against the storm,  
His red cross standard there unfurl,  
And round it all the battle whirl,  
And Roundhead balls on lattice hail,  
And Roundhead pikes the porch assail !  
Small chance were there in such affray  
For helpless maid or yeoman gray.

Hope grew, as every lingering hour  
Brought naught of martial pride or power  
Against the sky or on the slope ;  
And Dayrell's news assured his hope  
The tide of war would roll away  
To other scene and future day,  
Nor mar nor scar with blighting spell  
The home his youth had loved so well.  
Yet, had his arm and heart been free  
To join the battle's phrenesy,  
Twice nerved had been that arm to kill,  
Twice edged his sword, by hate and skill,  
And in the foremost charge had proved  
By what strong power his heart was moved ;  
But now, some southern shire shall hear  
The wail that waits on Rupert's spear ;

And western homesteads, scarred and bla  
Shall mark the tyrant plunderer's track ;  
And many a castle, rent and riven,  
Shall tell where fell the wrath of Heaven,  
Till angered Justice raise her hand,  
And sweep him from the outraged land.

## CHAPTER XXIV.

## PRINCE RUPERT'S ARRIVAL—MARSTON MOOR

THE night is past ;—'tis noon once more  
Still lingers Fairfax near the moor,  
Where, gently rising from the plain,  
A hill o'erlooked the wide champaign,  
And shewed all bare the nearer scene,  
Then woods, with fields of corn between  
With varying tints of summer green.  
Beyond, deluding foliage hid  
All works of man 'twixt Tees and Nidd  
Behind sparse trees, by distance massed  
To semblance of a forest vast ;  
Till Hambleton, with barrier high,  
Rose blue and dark against the sky ;  
Presage of change in sky and earth  
Ere morrow gave her morning birth ;  
Presage of change to those who trace  
All human ills in Nature's face.  
Why lingers Fairfax ? Is the spell  
Which Nature breathes invincible ?  
Must he too yield to Nature's mood,  
And feel her tides in nerve and blood  
Swell unresisted to their flood ?

Ah, Nature's voice, so sweet, so still,  
The echoing caverns of the heart can thrill,  
And move the boldest breast to do her soft yet iron will.

Why lingers Fairfax with the horse ?  
While Leven speeds the Scottish force  
Southward on foot, and glances stern  
His eyes on lagging footsteps turn,  
And oft the eastern roadways scan  
For Rupert's vaward wing or van ;  
In fear lest Rupert gain the bridge,  
Or vantage seize on neighbouring ridge ;  
Such vantage might their fate decide,  
Or whelm in Wharfe their Scotland's pride ;  
In ruin drive them, whence they come,  
Dishonoured to their mountain home.  
Why lingers Fairfax, when such haste  
Lord Leven makes till Wharfe be passed ?  
No sign of battle marks the heath,  
No trumpet calls to life and death ;  
A careless band wheels o'er the plain,  
Retreats, and Peace resumes her reign.  
Yet lingers Fairfax. Overhead  
The clouds in airy squadrons sped,  
Now charging, as to battle driven  
By some resistless impulse given,  
And, in bright phalanxes arrayed,  
Their march majestic displayed ;  
Now in light troops that scour the plain  
In flank and rear of battle main,  
And ever gathering as they fly  
Some secret strength from sun and sky ;  
Till troops to regiments are grown,  
And regiments are cohorts shewn  
Rolling in ceaseless waves of war  
To join the boisterous strife in unseen regions far.

But not alone does Fairfax mark  
The northern hills distinct and dark,  
The gathering clouds in anger rolled,  
The shadows sweeping o'er the wold ;  
Cromwell and Leslie see the sign,  
And form their troops' retreating line ;  
But, ere Lord Leven's track they take,  
A hundred shouts the stillness break,  
And Echo's hundred throats their joyful answer  
make.

Nor had the shout forsook the tongue,  
When forward in wild haste the downcast troopers  
sprung,

And loud the hated name in angry clamour rung.  
'Twas "Rupert, Rupert," choked their breath,  
"Rupert has reached the further heath ;  
See, from the wood his squadrons glide,  
Faster they come,—their ranks divide,  
And marshalled order take in line extending wide.  
O'er mead and field his footmen stream ;  
Orchard and copse with whitecoats gleam ;  
Hessay is rumbling with the din  
Of many a ponderous culverin ;  
Tells a true tale that waking hum,  
Rupert with all his force has come."

Fairfax beheld the sight with joy,  
The kindling fire illumed his eye,  
Flushed his swarth cheek with warlike glow  
And drove the darkness from his brow.  
"Summon Guy Dayrell," Dayrell came ;  
"Ride like the wind or levin flame,  
O'ertake the Scots, Lord Leven seek,  
Tell him the news, if thou canst speak  
Bid him return with utmost speed ;  
Fairfax will hold the hill at need ;

Bid him return for very shame,  
Lest treachery soil the Scottish name ;  
Bid him return and speed his host,  
Or he and Scotland's hopes are lost ;  
Enough." Ere slumbering Echo woke  
Guy Dayrell from the throng has broke ;  
And down the slope his steed is springing,  
And in his ears the words are ringing ;  
Nor fence nor stream his headlong pace  
Can stay in such eventful race.  
" Hugh Stockdale, seek Lord Manchester;  
Ply all thy skill of whip and spur ;  
Tell him that Rupert's reached the moor ;  
Fairfax will hold the hill till four,  
Then fly to Wharfe, as best he may,  
To bar Prince Rupert's southward way."  
" Quick to your ranks, ye troopers, hie,  
' God and our cause,' your rallying cry ;  
Our weakness will stern Cromwell hide,  
And form our line in order wide  
Along the hill ; the show may cheat  
The Prince, and hide the Scots' retreat.  
All hangs on bravery of show,  
If Leven's hither pace be slow,  
Or Leven seeks in flight to shun the gathering foe."

Fast o'er the hill the troopers sped,  
And fast their lengthening line the leaders spread,  
Till Rupert saw against the sky  
A marshalled army's bravery,  
Nor knew how fast, how far, the Scottish footmen fly.

Meanwhile, from copse and thicket deep,  
The royal foot in silence creep,  
Unfurl their coronets in air,  
And swiftly form the deadly square.

But where the rank each footstep stayed,  
And when the foe was seen on distant hill array  
Each tried his chosen tools in War's most des-  
trade ;

The pikeman proved his ashen shaft,  
The musketeer his fiery craft,  
Buckled his harness tightly on,  
Seated more firm his morion,  
Tried how the jointed taces hung,  
Then forward as in act of deadly fight he sprung  
And high his pouldron-covered arm, to test its free-  
swung.

Then from the hill instinctive rose  
The cry which Vengeance claims from those  
Who victors recognize in onward-marching foes,  
And long have watched, but watched in vain  
For chance to expiate the stain

In interchange of blows.

From rank to rank the murmur spread,  
Swelling to cry more dire, more dread  
Than swells from torrent's rocky bed  
When winter storms their force have shed ;  
And tortured waters, pent and tost,  
In vast abysmal caves are lost ;  
Till, loud as from the cannon's throat,  
On Rupert's ear defiant smote  
The ominous, revengeful note ;  
And half he started at the sound,  
And cast his eye expectant round  
To see the hissing ball in leaps tremendous bound  
Then marvelled what the sight could be  
That roused such sudden phrenesy.  
But scarce his eye had travelled o'er  
The distant hill, the nearer moor,



When, from the rear, an answering cry  
Swelled loud as shout of victory,  
When spearmen see the fight is won,  
And wildly in dismay wrecked foemen hurrying on ;  
And joy and wrath find vent in jubilant fierce tone.

And lo, fast issuing from the wood,  
The whitecoats make their order good,  
Stepping as confident and free  
As gallants to their revelry,  
And halting, rear the towering lance,  
And musket trim for swift advance.  
Their doublets bear, as snow-drifts white,  
The crimson stains of many a fight ;  
Fair gleams their harness from afar,  
But nearer view shews dints of war ;  
For naught they recked where fell the blow,  
If levelled pike could feel the foe,  
Or their strong arm had space to swing the sword  
enow.

Sprung from the hardy Border race  
Who held their lands by War's rude grace,  
And set their seal with bloody hand  
To title good for Borderland ;  
On mead and fell the herbage green  
Was witness where that hand had been  
And Cheviot's mountain valleys nigh  
Still echoed with their warlike cry.  
Fierce was their look, their bearing wild,  
As if by mountain breezes thrilled,  
When dawn to night alarm succeeds,  
And gathering to the strife each angry yeoman speeds.

Though bright and gay their doublets shewed,  
And bright their burnished harness glowed ;

'Twas living flame that fired each eye,  
More dire in its dread brilliancy  
Than breast-plates' steely gleam or lances sp  
high.

Wild o'er the heath, in fierce acclaim  
Of triumph, swelled Prince Rupert's name ;  
" For God and King Prince Rupert lead,  
We all will in the vanguard bleed,  
If Rupert's rapier point the way,  
And Rupert leads our brave array,  
And Rupert's ensign wide where Rupert fights di

On hilt instinctive Rupert laid  
His hand, and half outdrew the blade,  
Struck with sharp spur his charger's side,  
But reined him ere he reached his stride ;  
Then thrust the rapier swiftly home,  
Stilled with his hand the rising hum,  
And stayed the quivering ranks that onward  
come.

Hot Rupert calm with foe in view !  
And those long ranks of martial hue  
So gaily bending to the strife,  
So prodigal of death and life.  
Yet Rupert reins his charger tight,  
Glances in doubt from left to right,  
As one who wills, yet may not fight ;  
From his flushed brow removes the caske  
And turns him to the unwonted task.

" Rest in your ranks ; till morrow bide ;  
At dawn shall be your valour tried ;  
Would ye that darkness maim your blow,  
Or night's dark wing should shield the foe,

Or scant you of your honour's due,  
And steal the spoil when close in view?  
Bide patiently awhile as ye be yeomen true.  
Four days have brought you from the west;  
Success has sharpened battle-zest,  
But marches long earn goodly rest.  
Trooper and steed and footman all  
To slumber, not to fight, should fall.  
At dawn ye'll rise with vigour new  
And arm as strong as heart is true;  
And all day long, if so ye will,  
Of fighting ye may take your fill;  
Would Rupert see your labour wasted,  
War's banquet fail when barely tasted,  
Because to join the strife with weary limbs ye hasted?

"Is Rupert wont to shun the fray,  
When Rupert leads such brave array?  
Does Rupert's rapier idly gleam  
Where sluggish runs war's battle-stream,  
And point, not lead, the way to go?  
Or where war's eddies wildest flow,  
And maddest raves her torrent throe?  
His ensign rearward idly float,  
When swells the trumpet's charging note?  
Your battle-cry, 'For God and King,'  
Will Rupert hear, nor forward spring?  
Call Rupert coward, when ye bleed,  
If Rupert fail your ranks to lead;  
If Rupert's arm in fight be weak;  
Or Rupert's lips be slow your sovran will to speak;  
Bide patiently awhile, War's fast the morn shall break."

Scarce had his will their leader spoke,  
Ere loud response the silence broke,  
And with the approving shout long-answering echoes  
    woke.

"For God and King, Prince Rupert best  
Can lead our ranks to strife or rest ;  
Bide patiently till dawn, ye yeomen from the west

## CHAPTER XXV.

## PREPARING FOR BATTLE—MARSTON MOOR.

MEANWHILE, austere and silent stood  
The long dark lines of yeomen good,  
Distinct against the sky,  
Along the hill unbroken spread,  
All whom the fiery Fairfax led,  
Their pennons fluttering overhead,  
Their lances sparkling high.  
The hurrying cloud its shadow cast,  
Dulling their armour as it passed ;  
The storm gust swept their ranks amain,  
The wild wrack spent its strength in vain  
In crashing flight of arrowy rain.  
No shrinking trooper spoiled the line,  
No steed might from the rank decline,  
None shunned the rushing storm ;  
More stern in gloom those ranks appeared,  
More high their towering pennons reared,  
More giant-like their form  
Than when their harness bravely glowed  
With sunbeams through the rifted cloud,  
Or when defiant, fierce, and proud  
Swelled o'er the moor their challenge loud,  
And flashed on high their arm.

The storm is past. Their ranks divide,  
Wheeling in troops to either side,  
To take their destined post ;

But now their eyes were southward bent,  
As gaily to their post they went,  
And gloom gave place to merriment,  
And waving hands their welcome sent  
To the returning host.

Then did Prince Rupert's wakeful eye  
The Roundhead stratagem descry,  
And mark, where late their troopers rode,  
The gap their opening order shewed,  
As o'er the trampled rye appears  
The twinkling light of countless spears  
Swift rising to the view.

So rise the stars from mountain crest,  
Where climes with tropic skies are blest ;  
And the short eve's transparent light  
Melts to the splendour of the night,  
And gives no misty radiance white,  
Nor aught of cloudland to the sight,  
Nor aught of twilight hue.

Quick following, where the spear points shewed,  
The slender pikeshafts' quivering wood,  
And plume and caske appeared ;  
Till full upon the hill's broad brow  
The dark, stern lines of footmen shew,  
And far upon the moor below,  
To rearward of the royal foe,  
Their leader's shout was heard.

There Crawford loud, with clamorous tongue,  
From rank to rank impetuous flung ;  
And Russell brave and Montagu  
To either flank their squadrons drew,  
With Pickering between.

With measured pace the leaders rode,  
In solid squares the pikemen strode ;

Muskets in phalanx deep and broad  
To stay the charge or clear the road,  
On either side were seen.

With laggard steps the Scottish host  
The summit of the hill have crossed,  
And, seeking safety's rearward post,  
In dilatory silence tossed

Their banners to the wind ;  
Small hope of plunder could they spy,  
With Fairfax and his troopers nigh ;  
'Twas plunder edged their battle-zest ;  
'Twas plunder spurred them to their best,  
And shared with God their mind.

Rupert had robbed them of their spoil,  
And brought no meed to bless their toil

In all his warlike train ;  
Why risk, in England's cause, the chance  
Of Rupert's sword or Border lance ?

Why fight upon the plain ?  
With all to lose and naught to gain  
Save mortal peril, wounds, and pain  
And right to boast of scar and stain,  
Or title to a grave with the unhonoured slain.

Such thoughts had passed through Leven's breast,  
As to the Wharfe the flight he pressed ;  
But now to martial fire are changed  
As o'er the moor his skilled eye ranged.  
Such scenes dispel the gloomiest mood  
That taints with doubt a soldier's blood,  
And fan the embers of the fire  
That discontent had bade expire.  
His was a heart inured to fight  
To win his cause, or wrong or right ;  
And rudely had that heart been schooled  
In wars the Swedish monarch ruled.

THE  
CASTLE  
OF  
KNARESBURGH.  
A  
POEM  
IN  
FIVE  
ACTS.  
BY  
J. H. STODOLSKY.  
LONDON:  
W. B. ELDON & CO.,  
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1881.

Not so his men ; their native greed  
Had brought them headlong from the Tweed  
To seek such spoil as Douglas won,  
Or match the deeds by Randolph done ;  
For still Tradition's bloody tale  
Of England's pillage, wound, and wail,  
Fired Scottish breasts by hill and dale.  
And oft from Cheviot's mountain brow  
Their eyes with hungry light would glow ;  
And hungrier thoughts would southward go,  
Then count with glee the ruins black  
That marked old Scotland's Yorkward track,  
Burning to dare where Douglas quailed,  
And win the spoil where Randolph failed.  
Yet once in line, for fight arrayed,  
And pike met pike, and blade met blade,  
Full well they plied their deadly trade,  
And stubborn hardihood displayed  
    And rugged strength and skill.  
No foe could of their mercy tell  
If wounded, where they fought, he fell,  
No sword had done its service well,  
    If e'er it failed to kill.  
Their stubborn mood their leader saw,  
While slowly to the line they draw,  
    And midway gave them post,  
Where England's foot might guard their flanks  
And lead the fight with those stern ranks  
    Lord Leven trusted most.

And well might Steeton's valiant knight  
Hold peril's post on Scotland's right,  
    When such bold hearts were there ;  
Rough dalesmen fired by holy zeal  
And sinewy as their own grey steel,  
    Material meet for war ;

Nursed, where, from moorlands dark and st  
Her hundred streams to Calder leap ;  
And shepherds still their freedom keep,  
And yeomen free their fields may reap  
Amid the wilds of Aire.

A different purpose fired the zeal  
Of those who fought for Commonweal ;  
Their aim as true and good,  
Who plied the townsman's handicraft,  
And bench and loom for musket left,  
And now in battle stood.

Such ranks the knight of Steeton led,  
And with them fought, and with them bled  
On many a desperate field ;  
Where hearts less bold had shunned the fight  
And safety sought in discreet flight,  
Or evening's dusky shield.

On sullen Scotland's further flank  
Loud Crawford schooled the fighting rank  
In fiery accents rude,  
Till, roused by his impetuous tongue,  
Their good pikes to the charge they swung  
And, bending o'er them, trembling hung,  
As ocean tides 'gainst land-breeze flung,  
Rise threatening to their flood.

While Leven gives the Scots their place,  
And Baillie chides their loitering pace,  
The knell for strife has rung ;

And culverin and falconet,  
At vantage on the hill-side set,  
The battle gage have flung.

High overhead the hissing note  
On Scottish ears indignant smote,  
And fired them 'gainst their will ;



Instinctive to the line they press,  
In haste their errors to redress,  
And vacant front to fill.  
And now, from stubborn humour freed,  
A child those eager ranks might lead.  
To midmost of the fray ;  
No need to toss the banner high,  
No need of Crawford's charging cry,  
Nor Leven hovering watchful by  
The faltering line to stay.  
Though still their leader's practised eye  
Some error in the line can spy,  
Some weakness half-concealed,  
And down the ranks, with measured pace,  
To give the crowding shotmen space  
Their cumbrous gear with ease to ply,  
And draw them to the pikes more nigh,  
Strides Leven through the field.

ut now, from van to baggage guard,  
Each square and squadron stands prepared  
In Leven's shrewd array ;  
Each blade is bare and flashing bright,  
Each musket trimmed for instant fight,  
Each clenched hand on the pikeshaft tight  
Is trembling for the fray.  
The cannon, that awhile did throw  
Their thunderous wrath against the foe,  
Are hushed in sudden calm ;  
As stern-browed men, severe of mood,  
And aspect to their thoughts subdued,  
In tones that thrilled those soldiers rude  
With phrenesy of death and blood,  
Proffer to Heaven their psalm.

O God of hosts, behold  
Thy saints for battle met,  
By perils manifold  
And Satan's wiles beset.

The oppressor's host is nigh,  
And armed with hellish might ;  
Lord, raise Thy sword on high  
And sweep them from Thy sight.

To Israel's chosen few  
Thou, as of old, wilt give  
Strength hip and thigh to hew  
Thy foes without reprieve.

Clad in Thine armour strong  
Of Faith and Righteousness,  
No powers of hell can long  
Our ransomed souls distress.

Thy sword we bear in hand ;  
Lord, give us strength to smite,  
Till, as on Egypt's strand,  
Thy foes are vanquished quite.

Baal's worshippers are bold  
And high their symbols raise ;  
Lord, slay them as of old,  
When Jehu won Thy praise.

Lord, breathe upon their pride  
Thy anger unconfined,  
Disperse them far and wide  
Like chaff before the wind.

Help us with David's arm  
The Philistine to slay,  
And feel nor fear nor qualm  
For lions in the way.

Lord, we, like Samson bound,  
In heathen fetters lie ;  
Give us the strength he found,  
For Philistines are nigh.

Keep in thy gracious sight  
The wrongs Thy people hath,  
And with Thy vengeance smite  
The hosts of wicked Gath.

For Samuel's faith we cry  
When Agag he did hew ;  
Lord, smite them hip and thigh,  
Their carnal powers subdue.

We crave Thy spirit, Lord,  
As it on Joshua fell ;  
Steel heart and arm and sword  
To do Thy service well ;

And unto Thee the praise,  
More loud than Deborah's song,  
Thy ransomed saints always  
Shall in due psalms prolong.

## CHAPTER XXVI.

## THE FIRST ONSET—MARSTON MOOR.

PRINCE RUPERT watched with scornful eye  
The Roundhead footmen bend the knee ;  
He saw the preacher's suppliant hand  
Uplifted o'er each kneeling band,  
As one who draws Heaven's fire to earth  
To scathe all foes of human birth ;  
He marked the tenour of his psalm  
Pregnant with blessing, curse, and harm ;  
Nor less the murmurs, doubt, and dread,  
That through the royal vanguard spread ;  
For still religion taught them fear,  
And curse more dire and doom more drear  
Ne'er tingled trembling mortal's ear.  
'Twas more than dread of wounds and death  
That shed such calm o'er Marston heath,  
Those ranks in silence held ;  
'Twas awe obscure, impalpable,  
Of nameless ills from heaven or hell  
Those reckless spirits quelled.  
Prince Rupert marked the trembling hand  
Relax from musket, pike, and brand ;  
The flush of battle on the face  
Fade and grow pale and leave no trace ;  
The eye uncertain wander round,  
As if ear heard unearthly sound  
Of distant shriek and moan  
From men o'erta'en by mortal fear,  
And whelmed in flight by fiends of air,  
To human ken unknown.

'Twere vain to fight in such a mood,  
And lead men with such fears imbued ;  
    To trust the trumpet's note  
To banish terrors undefined  
And wake them to a better mind  
    Were useless antidote.  
'Twas superstitious reverence gave  
Such terror to the preaching knave,  
    And wove such direful spell ;  
And superstitious reverence still  
Might wild, fanatic fire instil,  
With scorn of even unearthly ill  
    And victory foretell.

The ruthless psalm was barely done  
Ere chaplains through the ranks are gone,  
And with bared head and bended knee  
And prayer and chaunt and litany,  
Ta'en from the Church's ritual,  
For blessing on their valour call  
And service given in coming fight  
For God and Charles's royal right.  
Soon Reason wins her rightful sway ;  
The murmurs die in prayers away ;  
The wan cheek burns with kindling ire ;  
The eye with waking valour's fire ;  
The blade, late held in listless clasp,  
Grows fixed in unrelenting grasp.  
With prayer and psalm their aspects changed,  
And through expression's gamut ranged  
From dull despair and wan distress  
To sternest calm and hopefulness ;  
Strange doubt gave way to confidence,  
And this to waking valour's sense ;  
Till all the panic-struck array

Looks proud, impetuous, bold and gay,  
And bending eager to the fray.

Their spirit changing as they knelt  
Through all the lengthened ranks was felt,  
Till tremor of their warlike joy  
Kindled the flame in Rupert's eye,  
And, waiting not the closing prayer,  
He lifted high his sword in air,  
Dashed in his charger's flank the spur,  
Nor stayed to list the rising cheer ;  
But fast he flew from rank to rank,  
And halted on the western flank,  
Where, all too late, his eye espied  
The vantage ground on Tockwith side ;  
A slope scarce seen, whose margin round  
Two sluggish streams through rushes wound,  
And, joined in one, the field divides,  
Where vanguard against vanguard strides,  
Small though it be, the hill commands  
And flanks the rush of charging bands ;  
Thence, 'twixt the fronting hosts, was seen  
A narrow band of deeper green,  
And, midway from each marshalled host,  
As yet by venturous foot uncrossed,  
Ran the dull stream its course until in distance  
Such post might prove in conflict stern  
The hinge on which the day might turn,  
And all the length of front defend,  
To check the foe or shield the friend  
That strove in onslaught fierce the painful calm

Rupert on instant gave the word  
To seize the hill at point of sword,  
And yield it not, whate'er betide,  
And 'gainst them all the Scots should ride.

But, ere his troop the stream has crossed,  
Frizell had seized the vantage post ;  
His horsemen swing the light dragoon  
From shoulder to the pommel down,  
And fast the deadly volleys pour  
To sweep the bank and nearer moor,  
Till Rupert from the charge with timely haste gave  
    o'er,  
And drew his baffled troopers back  
Disordered on their onset's track.

Then Leven waved his sword on high,  
And shouted loud his battle-cry ;  
"Forward, for God and Commons' right ;  
Forward, and God shall judge the fight !"  
Then woke once more the battle din  
From cannon's throat and culverin ;  
Pealed the hoarse trumpet's charging note,  
With vengeance and war's frenzy fraught,  
Till all the quivering line the joyful summons caught ;  
And fiercely echoing back the tone  
Of the wild-shrilling clarion,  
    But dreader and more fell  
Than aught in battle's turmoil blown,  
Or aught to Nature's warfare known,  
    Bursts forth the answering yell.  
Oh, what revenge was in that shout !  
Incipient death and wounds and rout,  
    Wild wreck and ruin vast ;  
Its baleful accents all too well  
Wan widowhood and orphan spell  
    And childless age aghast.  
Oh, would that on the battle plain  
Sorrow would rest amid the slain,  
    Nor quit the direful scene

To work worse havoc and more drear  
In homes of yeoman, hind, and peer,  
Sating with hopelessness of grief  
Worn hearts to earthly voices deaf,  
And numb with anguish keen !  
Why wings Despair her sable flight  
In headlong haste from fields of fight  
To village homes afar,  
Nor stays, content to curse the dying,  
Or still the voice for mercy crying,  
And wreck alone the vainly flying  
In horrors brief of war ?

But bravely all their harness glowed  
With sunset through the drifting cloud,  
And wildly all their banners flowed  
Upon the evening gale,  
As down the slope in stately haste  
Each regiment and squadron passed,  
To do Heaven's high and stern behest  
Ere summer's twilight fail.  
And, foremost in the echoing van,  
Loud Crawford's foot in silence ran,  
Six spears' lengths from the line,  
Heedless of death, and answering not,  
With charging cry or musket shot,  
The furious storm that burst in wrath  
And fire along their venturous path  
To Rupert's standard sign.

They reach the stream,—the foremost rank  
Leaps swiftly to the further bank ;  
The ranks behind more slowly push  
Their miry way through sedge and rush,  
And gain the open moor,—



And pause, but for an instant's space,  
For each to take his fighting place ;  
Then stride for stride in equal race

    Upon the foe they bore ;  
More fiercely flashed each flaming eye ;  
And fiercely rose their battle cry

    Above the cannon's roar,  
As, quickening in his vengeful stride,  
Each foe his foeman's face descried,  
The flaring match-fires, close at hand,  
By evening's fitful breezes fanned,  
The horror of the cannon's throat,  
The spurt of flame from touch-hole shot,  
The flood of smoke, like furnace breath,  
That, poured in many a circling wreath,  
Slow followed where the ball of death

    Their ranks asunder tore.  
Though rent and riven by shot and ball  
That opened War's rude carnival,  
With narrowing front and line compressed  
To fill the gaps by Death possest,  
And feel such sympathy and charm  
As comes from touch of comrade's arm,

    When foes are all before,  
In fury all their onset broke,  
With frenzied and relentless shock,

    As on Tintagel shore  
The towering billow shoreward creeps  
From mid-Atlantic's ocean deeps,  
And feels his ancient foe beneath  
With rocky barriers dare his path,

    Then trembles to his roar,  
And louder in exultant might,  
And towering to more dreadful height,  
Gathers his strength for deadly fight,

    And sweeps those barriers o'er.

So bent and burst the wrathful flood  
Where Rupert's valiant yeoman stood  
    Arrayed upon the moor.  
And louder, louder swells the din  
Around each silent culverin,  
Where, foremost stricken as they stand,  
Each gunner feels some leader's brand ;  
And, clenched within his quivering grasp  
That tightens with each choking gasp,  
The match-fire, late so weirdly bright,  
Is dwindled to a spark of light,

    And quenched in mud and gore.  
Then streaming blades on helmets crashed,  
And gleaming pikes on pikes were dashed  
    And keenly sought to win  
Some crevice where the jointed tace  
Hung with an ill, uneven grace ;  
Or breastplate thong with loosening hold  
Revealed the doublet's scarlet fold,  
    To let Death deftly in.

Not long might halting foeman bear  
Such sudden onset of the spear ;  
One moment firm, then backward borne,  
Not in despair or rout forlorn,  
But step by step, with face to foe,  
They yield reluctantly and slow ;  
Till wanes the charge in efforts weak  
The firmly blended square to break,  
A furlong rearward of the line  
Where stands the captured culverin.

Meanwhile, by Crawford's onslaught fired,  
And instincts rude of war inspired,  
More sure to tell than loud command  
Or leader's forward-pointing brand,

What best to do, where most to dare  
 The chances of uncertain war,  
 The Scottish host the ditch have crossed,  
 And gained their forward fighting post,  
     Unshattered and entire ;  
 Though there Prince Rupert's battle main  
 With threatening aspect held the plain  
     In clouds of smoke and fire ;  
 Till Porter steeled his faithless heart,  
 And, feigning Valour's better part,  
     Gave order to retire.  
 With curses blent the order ran  
 From rank to rank, from man to man,  
 And stirred each stout Northumbrian  
     To stubbornness and ire.  
 Awhile they stood, in vengeful mood,  
     To dare the Scots' attack ;  
 Till, glancing round, their rear they found  
     A hundred paces back ;  
 Then stern and slow, with face to foe,  
     And pikes for onset laid,  
 Backward they drew to order new  
     Unbroken, undismayed.

## CHAPTER XXVII.

### THE CHARGE OF THE YORKSHIRE HORSE—MARSTON MOOR.

AND now upon the Scottish right,  
 Where waved the plumed of Steeton's knight,  
 The Yorkshire townsmen waged the fight,  
     And push of pike essayed ;

Their cry was, "God and Commonweal ;"  
Their arms of their own native steel

By Sheffield's craftsmen made ;  
And task more hard than Crawford found  
Was theirs to win the broken ground,  
And face the furious fusillade  
From hawthorn's living palisade,  
And bank and ditch and ambuscade

By sturdy Borderers manned,  
Who flew to war from Cheviot side,  
When Leven crossed Tweed's border tide  
To waste and wreck their land ;

Their weapons rude but not untried,  
Their coats, save with War's hues, undyed ;  
In close victorious fight, each stain  
Was witness of a foeman slain  
By fair Saint Mary's ruined pride,  
Or where the embattled Bar the foe defied,  
And spread the swift alarm and sortie surging

'Twere long the mournful tale to tell,  
How fast the struggling townsmen fell,  
Yet pressed impetuous on  
Their comrades through the treacherous broom  
To win free space and fighting room,  
Where stood, as carved in stone,  
The long white ranks of pikemen mute,  
And, motionless from comb to foot,  
Their polished harness shone.

Serenely bright the sunbeams played  
On levelled pikes for onset laid,  
As streams through rift in forest shade  
The last low ray by eve displayed,  
When winds to rest are gone.

Yet think not that their stillness told  
Of waning strength or valour cold ;

Their aspect stern, defiant, proud,  
 More threatening than War's clamour loud,  
 Or gathering strength of thunder-cloud,  
 Their former victories betrayed,  
 And confidence in War's rude trade  
 To stay such shock alone.

With quivering lip and scornful eye  
 They marked the foe now streaming nigh,  
 And knew by sturdiness of limb,  
 And bronzed cheek and aspect grim,  
 And foot that swerved not in the rush  
 Or reckless bound through brake and bush,  
 The foremost of each daring band  
 Were dalesmen from the dark moorland,  
 Where Calder's infant waters leap  
 In silvery foam from many a steep ;  
 And Aire in sparkling ripples spread  
 Dances along her sunlit bed ;  
 And Wharfe in natural merriment  
 Leaps down from castled Pen-y-Gent ;  
 And, hid in cloud, the modest Nidd  
 Creeps to the light on scarred Whernsydde,  
 And, to a brawling torrent grown,  
 Dashes impetuously down,  
 Till her wild eddies pent and tossed  
 In vast, abysmal caves are lost.  
 Amid such scenes of Nature's strife,  
 With struggle and endurance rife,  
 Stern hardihood might well have life,  
 And win its way where weaker nerve  
 From Danger's rugged path would swerve,  
 Breathless and faint from failing limb,  
 Or daunted by the phalanx grim.

No marvel then those dalesmen rude  
 Should win their way by hardihood,

And, foremost in the glittering line,  
Leap in impetuous onset fine ;  
Nor linger till the main advance  
Should give their charge more equal chance  
As leaps the foam, when tempests rave,  
A stone's cast from the furious wave  
That toils and struggles with the shore  
Feeling its waning strength give o'er,  
Then grimly hurls with dying throe  
Defiance on its steadfast foe ;  
As foam in useless effort dashed,  
Their onset on the whitecoats crashed,  
A moment flashed, then died away,  
And dyed the heather where they lay.

Nor might the labouring townsmen win  
E'en touch of that tremendous line,  
Instinct with wounds and death ;  
E'en as they toiled in breathless haste,  
Wild Fairfax in full charge has passed,  
Five thousand lifted swords have flashed,  
Five thousand rushing steeds have dashed  
To gain the open heath ;  
And loud o'er mingling tramp and din  
Roared the deep-throated culverin ;  
And, sudden as the lightning's stroke,  
From Urry's line the flash has broke,  
Not in the long, unbroken stream  
That bursts where modern bayonets gleam,  
In volleys from the lengthened line,  
When squadrons for the charge combine  
In Crimean valleys green ;  
But in short bars of flame that sprung  
The narrow-fronted squares along,  
Yet left still space between ;

Where Goring's horse, importunate,  
 In alternating squadrons wait  
     Command to give the rein,  
 And on the wavering onset fall,  
 Where, rent and riven by shot and ball,  
     Their shattered front was seen.

And oh,—such fitful anger shone  
 Beneath each glittering morion,  
     Such battle-glow was there ;  
 As, when upon her bloody lea,  
 The Crecy light of victory  
     Bade venturous foes “Beware ;”  
 Nor wake upon thy fields once more  
 That deathless shout, O Agincourt,  
     That tells of England's war.  
 So, centuries of England's fame  
 Flashed from those eyes of living flame,  
 A birthright pride in battles won  
 Bequeathed by knightly sire to son ;  
 And centuries of hopes subdued  
 Toiled in that broken onset's flood,  
 Instinct with memories of ill  
 And countless deeds of lordly will.

And, in the front full pikes' lengths three,  
 Urry and Lucas dauntlessly  
     In careless silence sate,  
 And with uplifted hand subdued  
 The torment of their furious mood,  
     And frenzy at their fate.  
 Nor long their task, with sudden thrill  
 The clarion's note resounding shrill  
 Gave freedom to each fretting will  
     To try the sword's debate.

Deep in each straining charger's flank  
The spur with maddening swiftness sank,  
Emerged and sank again ;  
O'er helm bent low and levelled blade,  
In momentary wildness played  
Each charger's tossing mane ;  
And foremost, fiercest leading on  
Lucas and Urry's rapiers shone,  
The finger posts of war  
To where the reeling foemen crowd  
To hold such line as ground allowed,  
And close the lanes by cannon ploughed,  
And heal the tortured square.

But, ere the shattered ranks unite  
And form the phalanx firm and tight,  
The respite brief has flown,  
And dancing bright the living tide,  
Gathering its strength at every stride,  
An avalanche swept on.  
So o'er Swiss valleys, far and wide,  
When rocky mountain peaks divide  
And thunder headlong down,  
The deluge, widening in its wrath,  
Sweeps the pine forests from its path ;  
At every step the ruin grows,  
Where wood or rock its course oppose,  
And hurls its mightiest crags afar,  
The leaders of its reckless war ;  
Yet veils the ruin of its shock  
In rearward clouds of dust and smoke,  
Forerunning far the crash that wakes behind the st  
And while aghast the peasants stand,  
Nor move the foot nor wring the hand ;  
They see the crashing terror come,  
But fly not from their ruthless doom.



So on wild Fairfax' troopers fell  
 Swift ruin ir retrievable,  
     Dismay and headlong rout  
 Awhile they dare the shock to feel,  
 But, pierced and rent, the squadrons reel  
 Beneath the storm of glittering steel,  
     The mingled crash and shout.  
 One moment played the rapiers' light  
 In wild uneven hopeless fight,  
 Where stood in stubborn hardihood  
 Some squire of gentlest Yorkshire blood,  
 Stemming with dauntless breast and eye  
 The headlong torrent sweeping by ;  
 Or yeoman dared, with brandished sword,  
 The vengeance of his slighted lord ;  
 Scorning to stain with coward shame  
 His village feud, his own good name,  
 Or leave to idle tongue the power  
 To mock with praise of Marston Moor.

Oh, then, what generous hopes were stilled !  
 What strong resolve each bosom thrilled !  
 To stay to die, when all were flying  
 Save the already dead and dying ;  
 And oh, what ecstasy of pain !  
 To die alone, and die in vain,  
 Mangled, unhorsed upon the plain ;  
 What memories crowd the reeling brain ;  
 Revealed to more than mortal sight,  
 Illumined by no earthly light ;  
 Loves, hopes and fears of other days,  
 Concentred in one moment's space,  
 Pass like rehearsal of the scene,  
 When all we were or might have been,  
 Life's turmoil, trials, woes, and stains  
 One momentary flash arraigns,

And dooms or damns us with the sight  
To larger joys or darker night ;  
Oh, what a vivid world is there  
Of life intense and deep despair !  
To live in death a second life,  
And wage with death a double strife.

But midmost of the unequal fray  
Guy Dayrell's sword clave desperate way,  
Unaided and forlorn ;  
Thrice was the venturous path essayed,  
Thrice was the maddened charger stayed,  
And thrice was backward borne.  
A hundred blades in passing flashed,  
Yet none on helm or breastplate crashed ;  
So quick of eye, so sure of hand,  
No shield could match his ready brand,  
Nor harmless fell the warding blow,  
But laid some reckless foeman low.  
One, fiercer, bolder than the rest,  
By memory of wrong possess,  
Darted a thrust at Dayrell's breast,  
And strove with vengeful grasp to force  
Guy Dayrell from his startled horse ;  
Oh, effort impotent and vain,  
Guy Dayrell dropped his charger's rein,  
Raised his mailed fist with giant's might,  
And struck to earth the luckless wight.  
So fierce the wrath that sped the blow,  
The caske was crushed the forehead through  
And, reeling to his knee, the steed  
Leapt riderless to wilder speed.

But where the shrinking chargers yield,  
And give free space his sword to wield,

Guy Dayrell's strength claimed fearful sway,  
 And onward forced resistless way.  
 To right and left the ranks divide,  
 And give free course, as roadway wide,  
 To where, in rear of battle main,  
 Lay tenantless the open plain.  
 Then had Guy Dayrell turned to find  
 Fresh foes and conflict to his mind,  
 And slake the raging thirst for fight,  
 That gave his arm such deadly might ;  
 But as he reined his flying steed,  
 That swerved in wilfulness of speed ;  
 Unnoticed at his charger's flank,  
 With spur and hilt that spoke his rank,  
 Kerchief and plume and helmet gone,  
 A horseman rode, and rode alone ;  
 Gashed was his cheek, his brow was bare ;  
 Bloodshot his eye, blood-stained his hair ;  
 Dinted and splashed with mud and gore,  
 Cuisse and cuirass War's traces bore ;  
 But not alone, the dripping blade  
 Told how his venturous part was played,  
 But played in vain ; for Fairfax now,  
 Of all that morning's martial show,  
 Of all that followed, bright and gay,  
 His joyous leading to the fray,  
 Views in Guy Dayrell's form and horse  
 The relics of his ruined force.

Guy Dayrell saw his bloodshot eye,  
 And marked his charger's breeding high,  
 And, spite of wounds, the dauntless pace  
 That spoke the spirit of his race ;  
 Yet knew not that the visage foul  
 Concealed his leader's fiery soul,

Till Fairfax spake, "Guy Dayrell, lead ;  
Guy Dayrell, thou art best in need ;  
Ride by the rear, 'tis not too late ;  
Some chance may turn the battle's fate,  
If Cromwell gives his charger rein,  
Or Leslie strike their battle main.  
Lead on. No better hope I spy ;  
Perchance, e'en Victory is nigh,  
But if she fail, 'twere best to die."

## CHAPTER XXVIII.

THE OVERTHROW OF THE WHITECOATS—MARE  
MOOR.

TURN we again the tale to tell  
What ruin on Lord Leven fell  
And all his vaward host ;  
As swift the shattered ranks emerge  
Disordered from the fatal charge,  
Their leaders slain or lost.  
As autumn leaves that, sere and brown,  
And by low breeze in forest strown,  
When clasped in tempest's wild embrace  
Leap frantic down the woodland chace ;  
To right, to left, now high, now low  
The whirling eddies madly go,  
Scattering the leafy spoils afar,  
The trophies of aerial war.  
So sprang in headlong, frenzied haste  
Wrecked squadrons o'er the heathery wast  
All martial pride and order gone ;  
Each trooper for himself alone,

Spurring where'er the open heath  
Gave respite from pursuit and death.  
Brief respite. Ere a trooper freed  
Could sheath his sword and rein his steed,  
The stream of flight burst forth anew,  
And wilder still its efforts grew.

Vain though it was, 'twas still more vain  
With flank by Urry's charge o'erta'en ;  
The flight that hitherto had flowed  
Along the track the onset trode,  
Now, by an impulse new possest,  
And into narrower line compressed  
'Twixt friend and foe, no more retained  
The course their leaders' foresight planned ;  
But reckless, in mad tumult now  
Leapt sidelong from the threatening blow,  
And, torrent-like o'er broken banks,  
Swept through the friendly pikemen's ranks ;  
Then ruin irretrievable  
On all the vaward battle fell ;  
Red Carnage did her ruthless work,  
And wreaked revenge for leaguered York.

Lord Fairfax saw with dire dismay,  
And strove in vain the flight to stay ;  
With look, with gesture, and command  
He bade the flying footmen stand,  
And in small companies combine  
To form once more their fighting line ;  
Nor fly to fall, as fall they must,  
Like earth-worms trampled in the dust.  
A few, and they of sterner age,  
In war experienced, bold and sage,  
Who owned the Fairfax as their lord  
In field, in forest, and at board ;

And ne'er had wished or dared to shrink  
From honour's post or peril's brink,  
In faithful service to their liege  
In camp or conflict, march or siege ;  
Their arm as strong as heart was true,  
To hear was will and power to do.  
Immediate at their leader's word  
The line of yeomen stands restored ;  
Their pikes are laid 'gainst foe and friend—  
And serve awhile the tide to rend  
In twain, but not to stay ; the force  
Of pikemen, musketeers, and horse  
Sweeps headlong past on either hand,  
Then bears away the little band,  
O'erpressed, o'erpowered, and defied  
By mad Confusion's reckless tide.  
So have I seen the rustic weir  
Stem the full current's swift career,  
When summer storms their force have spent  
Against its fragile battlement ;  
Yet to a thousand fragments torn,  
And helpless in the turmoil borne,  
When spreads the watery Terror wide,  
And Ouse rolls high his wintry tide.

A wilder stream than Ouse's pressed  
And bore Lord Fairfax on its breast  
Along the track their march had trode  
That morn to gain the southern road ;  
There, many a northern chief, I ween,  
In woeful disarray was seen,  
With anguish and despair distraught  
Amid the wreck their panic wrought ;  
And many a sturdy lowland wight  
Prayed for the falling of the night,

And eyed, with keen, suspecting look,  
 The path his trembling footsteps took ;  
 Cursing as still he hurried on  
 Proud Scotland and himself undone.

Along the slope Lord Leven rode  
 And told the fight as on it flowed ;  
 Each move, as on a chequered board,  
 The tablets of his mind record,  
 False, trivial or prominent,  
 With every changing incident ;  
 The onset, pause, disorder, flight,  
 Urry's advance along the right,  
 The serried phalanxes betrayed  
 And whelmed in wreck by comrades made ;  
 The rout, the ruin, and the shame  
 Revealed as by the levin flame.  
 Stunned by the blow the flight revealed,  
 Lord Leven in the saddle reeled,  
 Turned, and, despairing, fled the field.  
 Yet had he stayed to view awhile,  
 Despair had melted to a smile ;  
 Coy Victory flushed his cheek with joy,  
 And triumph fired his doleful eye.  
 E'en as he turned the echoes woke  
 Of Cromwell's stern, relentless shock ;  
 As, hurled against Prince Rupert, ride  
 Stout cuirassier and Ironside,  
 With all the impetus and force  
 Of reckless man and rushing horse.  
 Then rose the gleam of reddening steel  
 As Rupert's wavering squadrons reel,  
 And part, as parts the rending oak  
 Beneath the wrathful lightning's stroke,  
 To thousand fragments torn,

And, scattering rearward of the fight,  
Cumbering the plain in helpless flight,  
A hopeless wreck was borne.

Had Leven stayed but one short hour,  
He might have seen on Marston Moor  
War's fellest throe, and, all in vain,  
The desperate strife of hopeless men.  
When all was lost, their comrades flying,  
Save the unhorsed, the dead, the dying,  
The whitecoat band in stubborn mood  
Undaunted, kept their order good ;  
Though round them all the battle whirled,  
With Leslie's headlong squadrons hurled  
Upon them, front and rear ;  
Though Scottish pikes in crowded ranks,  
Pressed fiercely on the unguarded flanks  
With the relentless spear.

But why the hearer's heart distress  
With tale of Death's own wantonness ;  
Each moment saw the death-blow given,  
Each moment heard the soul, unshriven,  
In shriek and groan desert its clay,  
And unrelenting pass away.  
Ever the shrinking phalanx drew  
Its lessening files to order new ;  
Ever the crowding foemen took  
Each foot the yielding line forsook ;  
The stricken fell and, dying, gave  
His corse to stem the advancing wave ;  
Though still the opposing pikeshafts made,  
Betwixt the foes, a grim arcade,  
That sheltered, 'neath its deadly rays,  
The wounded for a moment's space ;  
The stubborn, slow yet sure, retreat  
Stilled them beneath their foemen's feet.



Then sank that phalanx firm and brave,  
 As islet in the rising wave,  
 That bears upon its loftiest crest  
 A few tall pines above the rest  
 That yield not, bend not to their fate,  
 Last relics of their forest state.  
 Of hope, of fear, of all bereft,  
 Alone their desperate valour left,  
 The fainting remnants of the band  
 In grim yet stately silence stand ;  
 They feel the swift-impending doom  
 Near and more near around them come ;  
 It bursts in loud, vindictive wrath  
 And all is hushed in blood and death.  
 Had Leven stayed but one short hour,  
 He might have seen strange wreck of power,  
 He might have seen hot Rupert flying,  
 His bravest captive, dead or dying ;  
 But Leven seeks the banks of Aire,  
 And draws not rein till safely there.

## CHAPTER XXIX.

### THE BROKEN VOW—MARSTON MOOR.

WHILE scenes like these the fields below  
 In panoramic grandeur show,  
 Bryan, secure to rearward far,  
 Marks the vicissitudes of war,  
 Views with a sigh the ranks arrayed,  
 The banners to the breeze displayed,  
 Hears the hoarse shout for onset given,  
 The tramp of steeds to battle driven.

Though all the plain the conflict filled,  
Though all the plain with battle thrilled,  
And each new scene of valour spoke,  
And each new sound strange echoes woke  
Within his heart, of coward shame,  
And fanned the smouldering fire to flame,  
Yet mindful of his plighted word,  
His life, his liberty restored,  
Bryan reluctantly repressed  
The promptings of his voiceful breast ;  
His heart was in the fight below,  
But his strong will forbade to go.

To sombre, stern, defiant mood  
Bryan his swelling heart subdued,  
And soothed with kind yet firm caress  
His steed's increasing restlessness,  
That heard the charging trumpet's peal,  
And felt the earth with onset reel,  
And tossed and strove for liberty  
To join the maddening revelry.

Bryan had marked the onset pause,—  
The lines of flame proclaimed the cause—  
Ere volumned smoke ascending drew  
A shadowy veil and hid the view.  
Then sought his eye the distant fight  
Where Cromwell charged on Rupert's right,  
And marked the countless flash of steel,  
The shuddering squadrons' backward reel ;  
But ere his eye the flight perceived,  
Or joyous shout his heart relieved,  
New foes seemed starting from the ground,  
Unseen before, in front, around,  
And perils of portentous birth  
To issue from the trembling earth.

Save for the tramp, the clang, the gleam,  
Bryan had held it but day-dream,  
And waited on in wonderment  
For its supreme development ;  
Though eye may fail, the ear can tell  
The meaning of such scene full well,  
And, " Forward ! Forward ! Forward !" seem  
Too urgent e'en for waking dream,  
And Bryan roused him at the sound,  
Lifted his steed to sudden bound,  
Struck deep the spur and gripped the rein,  
Then turned to fly, but flight was vain ;  
Squadrons of horse have gained the rear,  
And squadrons more in swift career  
On either side their chargers urge  
To gain the rearward battle's verge,  
And close the path the flight would take  
When Rupert on the Scots should break.

One moment Bryan's eye surveyed  
The peril, ere his steed he stayed ;  
Brief as it was, that moment, fraught  
With strange intensity of thought,  
Recalled a hundred acts to prove  
The unmeasured depth of Godfrey's love,  
The scene in Knaresburgh's dungeon cell,  
His plight so sad and terrible,  
The fate he feared, and feared too well,  
To pine awhile in dungeon gloom,  
Then change that dungeon for a tomb,  
Where, in the sunless moat beneath  
Lay the foul charnel ground of Death.  
How Godfrey risked his life to save,  
And saved him from a felon's grave ;  
Such thoughts had nigh his bosom steeled  
Defenceless to the foe to yield,

And take such fate as foes accord  
Who wield in tyrant's cause the sword,  
But stronger e'en than gratitude's  
The spell that on his heart intrudes ;  
The one but gleam of dawning day,  
The other, blaze of noontide ray ;  
And Janet's form and Janet's face,  
Her vivid tenderness and grace,  
O'ershadowed by the sense of woe,  
And darkened by her mind's o'erthrow,  
Before him rise in meek rebuke  
Of agony he least could brook ;  
Her lineaments of grief awaken  
The love of life lost hope had shaken,  
And Bryan turns and spurs amain  
To seek fresh safety on the plain,  
Where still the deadly conflict glows  
With countless gleams of struggling foes,  
And still the battle ebbs and flows.  
There wild Confusion's wing might shield  
And hide him till the foe should yield ;  
E'en rout might bear him from the field,  
If Scotland of the fight should rue,  
Or Cromwell from the charge withdrew,  
Or Rupert turned the tide, and struck with square  
new.

Though strong his will by purpose nerved,  
E'en Bryan from the task had swerved,  
So countless lay the foes beneath,  
Betwixt him and the distant heath ;  
But ready wit gave courage new,  
The kerchief from his caske he drew,  
Then darted down in guise of friend,  
Whose speed and news some change portend,

With hand upraised and sword in sheath  
He flew between those ranks of death,  
And nigh had passed the perils through  
That thronged on either hand his view.  
But twice a hundred steeds are dashing,  
And twice a hundred swords are flashing,  
To bear to earth with wound or death  
The headstrong fool who crossed their path.  
But very impetus of speed  
Stood Bryan in his weapon's stead ;  
For still within its sheath his sword  
Was witness of his plighted word.  
One thrust, more vengeful than the rest,  
Pierced joint and doublet to his vest ;  
One blow his right arm swept aside,  
A dozen fell with aim more wide,  
Till cuisse, cuirass, and helmet rung,  
And Bryan into madness stung  
Forgot his vow, unsheathed his blade,  
And pathway through the turmoil made.

But ere the western flank he gained,  
And ere his maddened steed he reined,  
Or pain of blow and wound assuaged,—  
The hilt his right hand still engaged—  
The face of all the field was changed,  
Cromwell triumphant o'er it ranged,  
Impelled the charge and sped the blow  
Against the firm though desperate foe,  
Or bands of Rupert's horse that fly  
Where hope or fear shewed refuge nigh.  
The last, the latest band that fled,  
All order lost—their leaders dead—  
A desperate wreck, a score at most,  
In flying, Bryan's pathway crossed ;

And last and latest in that band,  
As one who takes forlorn command  
Instinctively, and bears the weight  
Of peril and o'erwhelming fate,  
When comrades fly precipitate,  
Rode Godfrey slowly from the fight,  
As still relenting of the flight,  
Though from gashed cuisses streamed the  
And dyed the turf for many a rood.  
Bryan had sought, but sought in vain,  
To shun the path by Godfrey ta'en,  
And reined his steed to sudden halt,  
Like culprit conscious of his fault ;  
But Godfrey's eye on Bryan fell  
With wrath and scorn unspeakable.  
"Thou traitor to thy father's fame,  
Thou base defiler of thy name,  
Did Godfrey soil his faith to save  
A hound like thee from felon's grave ?  
Call Godfrey fool and traitor too  
To trust thee as an Ouseburne true,  
If thy black heart and traitor soul  
Escape from Marston's carnage whole ? "

As darts the panther on the boar,  
As leaps the angry wave to shore,  
His tones with awful vengeance rung,  
And full on Bryan Godfrey sprung.  
One moment saw his sword on high  
And Bryan warding desperately ;  
The next had seen his life-blood spilt,  
But faithless, shivering to the hilt,  
The treacherous steel on helmet flashed,  
Through guard and comb revengeful crashed,  
And broken fell, its service done,

Where, motionless as sculptured stone,  
Lay Bryan, speechless and undone.

No word of pity Godfrey said,  
No tear his bloodshot eyeball shed ;  
One look of withering scorn he cast,  
As one who deems such look the last,  
And parts his future from his past ;  
That look bespoke a heart o'erstrung  
By an inextinguishable wrong.  
So the proud monarch of the glade,  
By comrade of his blood betrayed,  
Turns on the tame deceit an eye  
Whose mingled scorn and agony  
O'ermastering Terror's fluttering glow  
The tumult in his bosom shew.  
He feels the death-shaft in his side,  
The ebbing of his life-blood's tide,  
The torture of the rankling dart  
Strike through his frame to every part ;  
Though barbed the shaft a foe might wing,  
False friendship gave the poisoned sting  
That charged with living flame each vein,  
And wrought the fury in the brain.  
Forgot the wound, the mortal smart  
In anguish of his breaking heart,  
Till drooping head and eye grown dim,  
And pain contracting every limb,  
Convulsive sob and choking breath  
O'erpowering scorn with dread of death,  
Recall the instincts of his kind  
To perils scorn had chased from mind,  
And terror of the accursed spot  
Impels the flight till now forgot,  
And wakes his dying strength to seek  
Security in copse or brake.

## CHAPTER XXX.

## ESCAPE FROM THE BATTLE-FIELD.

ONE glance of fierce, relentless scorn—  
It seemed of hate and horror born,  
And scarce of human birth—  
From Godfrey's eye on Bryan fell,  
Such lurid light as poets tell  
Flares from the jaws of nearer hell  
To bounds of nether earth.  
That scornful glance, that eyelid dry  
Knew naught of ruth or sympathy,  
Nor aught of fear, as Godfrey cast  
His eye o'er Marston's blood-stained waste,  
Then spurred his steed and turned to fly,  
For troops of Roundheads hovered nigh  
The spot where Bryan fell,  
And, darting from the seething crowd,  
Where now the last resistance showed  
Its valour all too well,  
A score of Bryan's comrades leap  
With threats of vengeance loud and deep  
To avenge the yeoman's death  
And dye, ere Godfrey quit the plain,  
Their steel with the avenging stain,  
And lay the slayer with the slain  
On Marston's dreary heath.

And, foremost of the spurring crowd,  
Silent and grim Guy Dayrell rode ;  
His stout long-sword from point to hilt  
Shone ruddy, by the carnage gilt ;



Rider and horse all splashed with gore  
From comb to hoof might well give o'er,  
Yet still one task remains undone  
Ere Marston seems to Dayrell won,  
And Bryan stretched upon the plain  
Wakes all his ebbing fire again ;  
Full well he knew the flying steed,  
His colour and his Slingsby breed,  
And well he knew 'twere hopeless race  
Against such steed to urge the chase,  
Had he not marked the herbage dyed,  
The streaming flank, the laboured stride  
That promised to his practised eye  
An early close of life was nigh.  
Then treasured hate of Scriven's squire  
Filled every limb with instant ire  
And keener spurring than before  
In fierce pursuit Guy Dayrell tore  
Through Tockwith's silent street,  
Where hushed and pale each village wight  
List to the thunders of the fight,  
And rush of flying feet,  
And deemed as Dayrell swept along,  
Death's angel strode their homes among ;  
So much of vengeance in the clang  
Of Dayrell's steel-shod charger rang ;  
So much of Death was on the moor,  
They heard him at each shuddering door,  
They heard him at the lattice pane,  
They heard him in the shrieking vane,  
And sought in undisguised affright  
Safe shelter both from sound and sight.

But Dayrell saw not, heeded not  
The terror his wild speed begot ;

The foe in front, his friends behind  
Filled to the full both eye and mind ;  
With every nerve and sinew strained  
His headlong course he still maintained,  
And oft he deemed the race was won,  
And Godfrey's flight was well-nigh done,  
Yet ever as the chase drew nigh  
The gallant steed instinctively  
Sprang, ere the spur could wound his side,  
Or Godfrey's parting lips could chide,  
And flew like arrow down the wind,  
And left the toiling chase behind.  
And oft Guy Dayrell marked him leap  
Where streams were broad and banks were steep  
And, spite of pain, his dauntless heart  
Dare nerve and limb to do its part ;  
And still new strength he ever found  
To speed the rush or wing the bound,  
Though stumbling, to his knee he sank  
All trembling on the further bank ;  
Yet ever from the fall he sprung,  
As if his heart with shame was stung,  
Stretched his brave limbs to fullest length,  
And proved once more his utmost strength.

Nor was the confidence betrayed  
Which Godfrey in his steed displayed ;  
The hand as soft on bridle rein  
As maiden's touch to plaintive strain,  
Availed to guide the reeling steed  
In safety o'er each treacherous mead ;  
Rider and horse instinctive knew  
All that each dared or strove to do ;  
Each seemed responsive unto each,  
Each naught to learn and naught to teach,

Save where the brighter tints revealed  
To human ken the marsh concealed,  
Or osiers by the distant burn  
Warned Godfrey where his course to turn ;  
E'en then he shrunk from needless pain,  
And gently drew the guiding rein,  
As ladies stretch the silken skein,  
With quick though kind suggestion  
The perils of the path to shun.  
The touch, as light as summer spell,  
His rider's wish reveals full well,  
Through his brave heart that purpose thrills,  
His limbs with willing service fills,  
And guides unerringly to safer ground  
More surely far than chiding stroke or wound.

The sun was reddening all the west  
With promise, ere he sank to rest  
Of tranquil morn and cloudless morrow  
To chide revering Nature's sorrow ;  
With ruddiest tint the foliage glowed,  
Each leaf as tinged with Marston's blood  
Shewed Nature's mournful sympathy  
For England in her agony ;  
But all unseen by eye or mind  
Of Godfrey or his foe behind,  
Each on his charger's course intent,  
Nor eye nor mind to Nature lent,  
Nor heeded Cowthorpe's giant shade,  
Save that it marked the progress made,  
And told unerringly and true,  
How much was done or left to do.

Though fails at length with mutual fear  
The swiftness of their first career,

The varying interval displays  
No vantage to the flight or chase ;  
What gain affords each gentle slope  
To sturdier limb and Dayrell's hope,  
The level sward reclaimed once more  
Ere Godfrey traversed Ribstone Moor,  
And saw against the burning sky  
The distant castle dark and high,  
The bastioned wall, the stately keep  
That frowns o'er Knaresburgh's dizzy steep  
And high above the silent town  
The broad white standard proudly thrown  
Then hope revived in Godfrey's breast,  
Till now by scorn of life possest,  
'Twas hope to win the well-run race,  
And baulk the still relentless chase,  
Not love of life, nor dread of death  
That stayed his hand from dagger sheath,  
And sealed his lips since Bryan fell  
With silence as of magic spell.  
That hope redoubled with the sight  
Of Knaresburgh's castle-crowned height,  
And freed him from the desperate pride  
That spared his charger's pace to chide,  
And scorned, though life were in the sma  
To wound that gallant charger's heart.  
E'en now reluctant and distrest  
Godfrey must steel his ruthless breast  
Ere the swift blow and armed heel  
His charger's quivering flank may feel :  
Then braced once more to utmost speed  
His failing limbs the willing steed,  
And, reeling blind but resolute,  
Left far behind the fierce pursuit.

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No vantage to the flight or chase ;  
What gain affords each gentle slope  
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# CHAPTER XXXI.

## WAITING FOR TIDINGS OF THE BATTLE—KNARES- BURGH.

ALL day the castle ramparts rang  
 With martial tread and armour clang,  
 All day the anxious sentinel  
 List to the sounds upon the gale,  
 And strove with piercing glance to spy  
 Some signs of war on earth or sky ;  
 Above, each gust of wind unrolled  
 The broad white standard's ample fold,  
 That flag which scorned the Scottish might,  
 And dared the Douglas to the fight,  
 When Randolph plied the wanton torch  
 In transept, aisle, and sculptured porch,  
 Ere on their drear and blackened track  
 The fierce marauders hurried back ;  
 That standard waves as proudly now  
 High o'er the precipice's brow,  
 And cheer or stern defiance sends  
 Far o'er the vale to foes or friends.

Beneath, the broad white circle round  
 Of rampart marked the castle's bound,  
 And, rising at brief interval,  
 Ten sturdy bastions break the wall,  
 And high o'er moat and dizzy steep  
 Their stern and silent vigil keep ;  
 And far that precipice below  
 The winding Nidd in rippling flow  
 Dances through sun and shade along  
 With murmurs of her summer song,

And pours amid the whispering trees  
Her lay of soft melodious ease,  
While cliff and crag in fainter strain  
The slumbrous resonance retain,  
And the deep vale from base to brow  
Thrills with a cadence sweet and low.

All day the eager soldiers crowd,  
Where bastion roof advantage shewed,  
To trace Prince Rupert's Yorkward track  
From Ure through Galtrees' forests black,  
And read the signs of distant war  
In cloudy columns rolling far  
From Bootham's battlemented Bar.  
Flushed with the free and fierce debauch,  
Or haggard from the night-long watch,  
'Twas strong excitement stayed the brain  
With reckless scorn of sleep and pain,  
And fired and kept alive the spark  
That flashed beneath each eyebrow dark,  
And ever as their glances turned  
Eastward, that spark more fiercely burned,  
As if each eye had caught the fire  
That flashed from minster pane and spire,  
And glowed responsive to the ray  
With promise of some wild affray.  
And oft they spoke in tones of glee  
Of raid and foray far and free,  
Of Rupert's task, so bravely done,  
Of leaguer broke and battle won ;  
Forgot was trencher, bowl and board  
In episodes of war and sword ;  
The tables in the courtyard spread  
With bounteous tale of beef and bread,  
And rows of foaming tankards stood  
Unheeded by those men of blood.

Unheeded too the treacherous calm,  
 The fitful gusts presaging storm,  
 The distant moors, that dark and clear,  
 Near and more near each hour appear,  
 Till upland copse and rugged height  
 Reveal their secrets to the sight,  
 And bursts upon the landscape fair  
 The sudden storm in middle air.  
 E'en then no shrinking soldier stirred,  
 Or fled the tale but partly heard,  
 But crouching where the rampart lent  
 The shelter of its battlement  
 Drank in the accents fierce and rude  
 That told of some dark deed of blood.  
 Swift as it came, the storm has sped,  
 Breathing defiance as it fled,  
 And scornful, gathering from afar  
 Its trailing skirts for future war,  
 Till fold on fold against the sky  
 Combine in columns vast and high,  
 And, sweeping on in stately wrath,  
 The storm-cloud darkens all its path,  
 Leaving its track o'er leaf and blade  
 More splendrous for the transient shade.

Scarce had the soldiers deigned a look,  
 Or rain-drop from their harness shook,  
 Ere sudden as an earthquake shock  
 On wall and keep deep thunders broke  
     Out from the silent sky,  
 And ere they reach the neighbouring hill,  
 Or Nidd's wild steeps with echoes thrill,  
     Or crag and copse reply,  
 The clashing harness loudly rings,  
 As to his feet each soldier springs,



And bending o'er the battlement,  
Turn eastward eye and ear attent  
To read upon the summer air  
The signs and sounds of Rupert's war.  
Saw that each eye with rapture shone,  
Ye might have deemed them carved in stone  
Or effigies of warriors gone,  
Such strong restraint each frame subdued  
And stayed the tumult of their blood,  
Until against the eastern sky  
The spectre-cloud rose pale and high,  
And over wild and forest threw  
A gory veil of misty blue,  
While from the eastward broke once more  
Low murmurs of the cannon's roar ;  
Then, " Rupert, Rupert," rent the air,  
" 'Tis Rupert on the Scottish rear,  
Rupert has struck the rebel host,  
And hurled Lord Leven from his post ;  
'Tis Rupert wakes the battle din,  
And crowns yon crest with culverin ;  
'Tis Rupert leads the furious charge,  
Where Knavesmire gives free field and lair  
Unbroken by stream or wood,  
To tame the fierce marauders' blood,  
And wreak revenge their ranks among  
For centuries of Yorkshire's wrong."

## CHAPTER XXXII.

## THE FIRST MESSENGER OF NEWS—KNARESBURGH.

BUT louder with the evening's close  
The thunders of the battle rose,  
And Yorkward, far as eye can strain,  
Low banks of smoke obscured the plain,  
And from them issuing far and high  
Broad beams of light illumed the sky,  
Such as the clouded dawn displays  
Ere morn reveals her glowing face;  
Half o'er the vaulted heaven they shone  
Divergent as from rising sun,  
While still behind the reddening west  
Sinks the low sun in clouds to rest;  
'Tis summer eve, yet summer dawn  
Seems in the dying day new-born;\*  
Presage, as once the steadfast sun  
To Hebrew eyes in Ajalon  
Of victory and Heaven's accord  
Of triumph to the rightful sword.

And now the sounds of war have ceased,  
The cloud is melting from the east,  
The shadows of declining day  
Fade into summer twilight gray;  
Yet still upon the Yorkward road  
In groups the impatient townsmen strode

\* *Rayons de crépuscule.* This phenomenon is very rarely seen in northern latitudes. The author has seen it in such vivid splendour in Ceylon, that he turned again and again towards the setting sun and recalled the events of the past day before he could assure himself that it was not the approach of dawn which he was beholding.

And spoke in anxious whispers low  
Of Rupert, Scot, and rebel foe,  
And, listening ever and anon  
For tidings of the battle won,  
Glean from the air each warlike sound,  
Or read in tremors of the ground,  
Prostrate upon the roadway bare,  
The murmurs of the distant war ;  
And ere to Eldstone Godfrey passed,  
'Twas known some trooper rode in haste  
With news of battle fought and done,  
So swiftly spread the tremors on ;  
And ere from Eldstone Godfrey passed,  
'Twas said that others followed fast,  
For countless tramp and clang confuse  
The ear that listens for the news.

Near and more near the clamour drew,  
The foremost steed appeared in view  
With drooping head and reeking side,  
Uncertain course and rolling stride ;  
He reached the bridge,—its thunders rung  
Grimbold's adjacent crags among ;  
He gained the slope and bravely pressed  
His falling limbs to win the crest,  
As on his reeling senses fell  
The loud pursuers' vengeful yell.  
Amazed, the townsmen stepped aside,  
Nor baulked the good steed in his stride,  
Nor asked where battle had been fought,  
What news of Rupert he had brought,  
But silent gazed, as if there passed  
The plague-struck dead in hideous haste.  
Though swift he passed, 'twas time to tell  
The news so sad and terrible,

“Quick, for your lives, the day is lost,—  
Rupert is fled,—the rebel host,—  
Behind,” and “Marston” caught the ear,  
Like echoes of his swift career,  
As Godfrey hurried on in flight,  
And vanished from their startled sight.

Meanwhile the soldiers, one and all,  
Stand motionless on tower and wall,  
Interpreting in whispers low  
The trampling in the vale below ;  
Spelling with shrewd, attentive ear  
The flight that ever drew more near,  
The measured stride, the even clang  
That on the level roadway rang  
And changed to dull and dubious tone  
As up the slope he laboured on,  
While every sound bespoke distress  
And wounds and utter weariness.  
They heard along the rattling street  
The echoes of his flying feet,  
They heard his faint and failing pace  
Relax upon the market-place,  
As, reeling blindly into sight,  
Came the first messenger of fight,  
And on the drawbridge, ere it rise,  
Falls the good steed and sinks and dies.  
Scarce drew the rider from his seat  
His stiffened limbs, and gained his feet,  
And helpless to the drawbridge clung,  
Ere loud the warder’s challenge rung ;  
A hundred voices asked his name,  
His news, his need, and whence he came,  
Half doubting of his woeful plight,  
Nor deeming friend could come in flight.

To speak the trooper thrice essayed,  
And thrice he left the words unsaid,  
Till the loud tramp of near pursuit  
Woke into speech his accents mute.  
" 'Tis Godfrey from the battle come,  
Raise the portcullis, speed him home."  
At once a hundred hands have seized  
The ponderous chains, the bolts released ;  
And ere the gate half open swung,  
A score of friends on Godfrey sprung,  
And bore him fainting and distraught  
In safety to the castle court.  
Nor aught too soon, the Roundhead chase  
Has swept through street and market-place,  
Has seen the gate half open flung,  
And fiercely to the passage sprung,  
And gained the bridge's crown ;  
E'en Dayrell's giant strength were vain  
Against portcullis bars to strain  
If e'er they thundered down.

But door ajar, and half-drawn grate  
Reveal the scene within the gate,  
The startled throng, the desperate chance  
To win the court by bold advance.  
Quick as the scene upon him flashed  
Guy Dayrell to the archway dashed,  
Seized on the ponderous nether bar,  
And bade his followers speed the war.  
Though grasped his hands the iron frame  
One instant ere it downward came,  
And stayed the hideous bars a space  
To give his panting comrades place  
Betwixt them and the ground,  
To hurl their force precipitate  
Against the slowly closing gate,  
And win the courtyard bound ;

**The** terror of the threatening fall  
**Da**unted the boldest, one and all,  
**And** checked their keen, impetuous haste  
**Till** motionless they stand aghast,  
**And** grating bolt and clanging bar  
**Warn** them 'tis now too late to dare  
**The** perils of such venturous war.  
**But** Dayrell, straining limb and nerve,  
**Felt** through his frame each sinew swerve  
     And harden as to stone,  
**Ere** starting from its ponderous thrall  
**His** o'erstrung frame from bar and wall  
     Was backward fiercely thrown.  
**Then** rose the cry, "It moves, it moves,"  
**And** hissing in the stony grooves  
     Crashed the portcullis down.

**Their** saddle seats the troopers gain,  
**Whilst** guards their muskets on them train  
**And** ply the matchfire free and fast  
**To** urge or stay their reckless haste.  
**But** ere they fled, their leader flung  
**Dayr**ell's defiance fierce and strong,  
**Thou**gh loud the hissing balls, around him shrilling,  
     sung.

## CHAPTER XXXIII.

JANET'S MIDNIGHT FLIGHT—HAMMERTON.

**TURN** we awhile from Marston fight  
**To** tell how Janet sped her flight,  
**As** darting from the orchard gate,  
**Like** frightened deer precipitate,

She flew adown the meadow slope  
In ecstasy 'twixt fear and hope,  
And gained the carr, and heeding not  
The marshy perils of the spot,  
Leapt with such lightsome step along,  
She left no footprint where she sprung ;  
No Marybud with petals crushed,  
No seed awn from the spearplume brushed  
Shewed where the flying maid had trod  
In trembling haste the dewy sod ;  
No fragrance from the wounded stem  
Upleapt to kiss her garment's hem,  
Nor plaint of torture or despair  
Rose on the stilly midnight air ;  
Save for the tiny dewdrops broken,  
Her footsteps left no sign nor token ;  
Ye might have deemed some sprite had passe  
She sped so light, so still, so fast.

The stream was near—a pine o'erthrown  
Gave pathway, perilous at noon  
To sturdy limbs and nerves inured  
By use to feel each step assured ;  
E'en then with care each step was tried,  
And balanced nice 'twixt either side ;  
But Janet paused not on the brink,  
Nor gave her courage time to shrink ;  
One foot scarce touched the fallen trunk,  
Ere on the further bank she sunk  
Trembling and breathless with the fear  
Of what her frenzied flight could dare.  
But keener than her own distress  
Came thoughts of Bryan's recklessness,  
As, sudden on her attent ear,  
Smote the harsh sounds of struggle near,

And loud the midnight welkin rang  
With vengeful cries and harness clang,  
As when men rush to mortal blows,  
And foemen strive with foes to close.

Then rued the maid her sudden flight,  
And Bryan left to bear the fight,  
Instinctive to the stream she leapt,  
But ere upon the bridge she stept,  
The clamour ceased, and all was still,  
Save that her heart, assured of ill,  
Seemed to reverberate with blows  
And shouts and clang of Bryan's foes,  
Save that with fight the air was thrilling,  
The very trees of war were telling ;  
The dancing marsh-fire's pallid ray  
Glanced on the stream in lurid play,  
And shewed the sword-leaved iris waving  
Uncertain with the current's laving,  
As if ten thousand arms were wielding,  
And with ten thousand blades were shielding  
The cradling, Ouse, from ruthless force,  
And guarding her to ampler course,  
She with such countless swords was bordered,  
Her very stream for war was ordered ;  
And yet, erect and undismayed,  
The loosestrife on the banks displayed  
Her golden charms, with promise blest  
Of quietude from war, and rest,  
When York the leaguering power should own,  
And Commons' rights and weal be won.  
'Twas but a momentary dream,  
Lit by the dancing marsh-fire's gleam,  
A vision, born of mortal smart,  
In the recesses of her heart ;



One moment called it to the earth,  
And gave it instantaneous birth,  
The next, it vanished from the sight  
In sudden sounds of Bryan's flight ;  
For down the street a steed is springing,  
And swift hoofs on the road are ringing,  
And half a furlong from the steed  
A score of chargers try their speed,  
A score of spurs with blood are streaming,  
A score of angry blades are gleaming ;  
Ye might have deemed the Scots were there  
Such cries of vengeance rent the air,  
Or Randolph come to war again,  
Such terror seized each waking swain.

Nay, ask not how the maiden prayed  
That Heaven would lend her Bryan aid,  
Nor how her ear the sounds could tell  
Of Bryan's flying steed so well,  
When close behind such foes were dashing,  
And twenty maddened steeds were crashing  
Along the summer-hardened road,  
That lay so level, fair, and broad.  
She heard him pass the ford alone,  
And knew that Bryan held his own,  
She heard him on the Elwick moor,  
And deemed her Bryan's flight secure,  
And, listing till the clamour ceased,  
Felt from her heart the load released.

One moment paused she where she stood,  
To lift her grateful heart to God ;  
Then plucked the loosestrife's crown of gold  
And hid it in her garment's fold,  
To foil the fearsome sprites of air,  
And still the terrors of despair ;

She drew an iris from the stream,  
And tore a sword-leaf from the stem,  
As if such fragile arm could shield  
Her trembling steps through wood and field ;  
Then swept aside the herbage dank  
That cumbered all the marshy bank.  
Along the level ing she sped,  
And safely reached dark Kirkby's shade ;  
Thorpe's watch dogs woke not as she passed,  
Or deemed her friend who made such haste.  
Briar nor bracken, bank nor beck  
Her flying feet availed to check ;  
The sullen bramble strove to clasp,  
And tore her garment in his grasp ;  
She heeded not his fierce embrace,  
Nor deigned to stay one moment's space  
To spurn with remonstrative wrath  
Such surly suitors from her path ;  
For, ever as she nearer drew,  
Ever the fancied peril grew,  
And faster, faster on she flew ;  
Till passing through the grim arcade  
By towering spruce and pine tree made,  
She reached the border of the wood,  
And all aghast and trembling stood ;  
For loud upon the village green  
She heard the shouts of hurrying men ;  
She saw the rushlight's sickly gleam  
Faintly from latticed windows stream,  
The shadows on the greensward cast,  
And ghostlike forms that gathered fast  
And deemed her Bryan's race was run,  
Her lover slain, herself undone.

Stunned by the blow, herself forgot,  
She felt no fear, she heeded not

The peril of her lonely state  
With foes so fierce and obdurate.  
From the deep shade she swiftly sprung,  
And reached unseen the hurrying throng,  
And stood amazed—no sword was bare,  
Nor aught of strife or death was there ;  
No clang of harness smote her ear,  
Nor aught with peril fraught or fear ;  
But village swains, the young, the aged,  
In eager questioning engaged,  
Each habited in rustic gear  
Lent to his hand by haste or fear,  
As startled from his sleep he woke,  
When Bryan through the village broke,  
And, following keen and resolute,  
Dashed on behind the loud pursuit.

Nor less amazed the gathering crowd  
Beheld how Janet breathless stood,  
Her bleeding arms, her forehead bare,  
Her tattered dress, her streaming hair,  
The fire that in her wild eye shone,  
Her speech now trembling to a moan.  
“Is Bryan safe ?” was all she said,  
“Is Bryan safe ; is Bryan dead ?”  
As fainting to the ground she fell  
O'erfraught with woe unspeakable.

But kindly hands her form upraise,  
And bear her gently from the place ;  
And kindly voices whisper, “Peace,”  
And bid her vain alarms to cease ;  
Bryan was riding like the wind,  
And far had left the chase behind ;  
No fear for Bryan, though such pack  
Of Rupert's wolves were on his track ;

Bryan by this the Ouse had crossed,  
Or reached Lord Leven's rearward post.  
With such kind words in whispers said,  
They strove to wake the lifeless maid,  
And cheer or chide her anguished heart  
Into oblivion of its smart,  
But strove in vain—each word as said  
Died in the sound its utterance made,  
Nor pierced to consciousness beneath  
The pallid counterfeit of death ;  
Nor knew they that the form they bore  
Could wake to life and love once more,  
But deemed, so motionless she lay,  
Life into death had slipt away.  
With gentle hands and bated breath,  
They paid such reverence to death  
As their rude hearts and simple mind  
And rustic faith and fear enjoined,  
A tribute to the helplessness  
Of the wan form in Death's duress.  
With knitted hands they frame a bier,  
Soft with a reverence sincere ;  
With wondrous tenderness they couch  
Her form, as if for human touch  
Too delicate, and their strong arm  
Could work her gentle spirit harm ;  
Nor word nor look nor sigh exchange,  
As slowly to the neighbouring grange  
They bear their drooping burden on,  
All sorrowful and woe-begone.

## CHAPTER XXXIV.

## THE CONFESSION—HAMMERTON.

FRAIL vestiges of summer night,  
The summer dews have ta'en their flight,  
And upward from the earth have borne  
The fragrant gladness of the morn,  
To bind the joyous earth and sky  
In a mute bond of sympathy.  
The myriad flowers of field and mead,  
From their deep sleep and drowsihead,  
Had woke all tremulous and coy  
To ecstasies of light and joy.  
Though gay the morn, the panelled room  
Bore traces of funereal gloom,  
Where Janet lay, so still, so fair,  
Old Ralph but deemed her spirit there,  
And half in reverence of the sight,  
And give her gentle spirit flight,  
Strode softly from the maiden's side,  
And slowly oped the casement wide,  
As if free air and summer day  
Could lure her mortal form away,  
And his sad eyes and aching heart  
Might see or feel that form depart.  
But naught in angel shape or guise,  
Or spirit bound for Paradise,  
Passed from the chamber's twilight gray  
To ampler scenes and fuller day.  
The air, as laden with its grief,  
Trembled around each quivering leaf,  
And softly stole the casement through,  
Softly aside the curtain drew,

And lingered, fearful to intrude  
On such funereal solitude ;  
Then waxing bolder, fold on fold,  
Slowly the curtain's breadth unrolled,  
And drew with deep-drawn breath anear,  
As mother to her infant's bier.

While softly round the maiden's head  
The sweet air crept and languished,  
And through the auburn tresses stole  
E'en to the precincts of her soul,  
With whisperings of a vast delight  
In summer fields and dawning light,  
The ring-dove, earliest with his lay,  
And wooing of the summer day,  
Like minstrel-errant from the war,  
Returns from foray free and far,  
And wakes again the hawthorn grove  
With murmurs of his plaintive love.  
To hearts, by Nature rude and fierce,  
That plaint of love should surely pierce,  
And all the dormant soul impress  
With sense of its own tenderness ;  
As spirit-song from nearer heaven,  
When mortals list and feel forgiven,  
And all their waking senses thrill  
With consciousness of rest from ill ;  
So to the maiden's heart it spoke,  
And from her death-like sleep she woke,  
Sighing as if some weary weight  
Or hand of overwhelming fate  
Were slowly from her breast upborne,  
And she to some new life were born.  
Old Ralph had marked with mute surprise,  
And wistful shading of his eyes,

The trembling lip, the quivering lid  
That slowly from the eyeball slid,  
The flush like shadow on her cheek,  
The voice still impotent to speak,  
And bending to the maiden's ear,  
Whispered his solace to her fear.  
"Bryan is safe—the chase was done  
An hour before the rise of sun ;  
I heard the troopers pass the gate,  
And curse their luck unfortunate ;  
I heard them say that 'Bryan now  
Has reached the Ouse two hours ago.'  
Bryan, I warrant, knew no fear,  
When Bryan rode such bold career ;  
And Bryan knew not Janet's heart,  
Or ne'er had played such venturous part."

The yeoman's words, though plain and brief  
Brought to her heart supreme relief ;  
Her hand the maiden placed in his,  
And softly blessed him with a kiss  
Of silent gratitude, in token  
The dismal spell of woe was broken ;  
E'en stranger's eye might surely guess  
The dreary sense of wretchedness  
Had flown, and in her soul was born  
The joy of day from night forlorn.  
She strove to speak, her accents came  
In fragments, halting, weak and lame,  
Till strength returned, and waking joy  
Gave a glad lustre to her eye,  
And look and speech alike confessed  
The rising raptures in her breast,  
And proved, if aught were left to prove,  
How fondly she had learned to love.

Yet much on Bryan's life she dwelt,  
His love in angry silence felt,  
His proud and wayward dauntlessness,  
Unbroke by dungeon's foul duress,  
His wild escape, the fearless love  
That led him home her faith to prove ;  
Then of her plighted love she told,  
And base designs of Ennisgold.  
The sudden blow, and Bryan's flight,—  
His rival slain—at dead of night ;  
Yet naught of hurt she shewed nor smart  
At Bryan's waywardness of heart,  
Nor aught her tone revealed of blame  
At mention of her Bryan's name ;  
She saw but Bryan brave and strong,  
The champion of his Janet's wrong.

Old Ralph with effort strong repressed  
The struggling tumult in his breast ;  
One moment on his rugged face  
Sorrow and anguish found a place,  
But faded sudden as they came  
From flushing cheek and eye of flame,  
Where wrath and fiercely gathering scorn  
Fire every lineament in turn ;  
But with them somewhat of the joy  
Of triumph mingled in his eye,  
And strove for mastery in his look.  
Three strides across the room he took  
To where an ancient heirloom stood,  
Carved with grim shapes in oaken wood  
And many a symbol quaint and rude,  
A massive chest with ponderous clasp,  
And iron band and curious hasp.  
He raised the lid and therefrom drew  
A parchment tome of ancient hue,



Then sate him by the maid once more,  
And turned the pages o'er and o'er,  
Until both eye and finger fell  
Where Deborah did God's triumph tell ;  
Then paused and read the Hebrew song  
In tones sonorous, glad and strong,  
While louder to the triumph's close  
His voice in fiercer accents rose,  
Till, when the final prayer was prayed,  
His tone some other thought betrayed,  
For " forty years the land had rest "  
Wrought sorrow in the yeoman's breast  
And sadness for the land distraught,  
And wrecked by royal camp and court.

So, ill at ease the yeoman strode  
To view his fields and meadows broad,  
And gain such comfort from the scene  
As come from fields with summer green.  
But scarce his eye had travelled o'er  
The nearer meads to Monkton Moor,  
When all the long and brave array,  
Marshalled for fight with banners gay,  
Burst on his startled view ;  
Athwart the Yorkward roadway thrown,  
The long bright lines of helmets shone,  
And ever lengthening grew ;  
Pennon and coronet in air,  
With many a Scottish ensign fair,  
Above them proudly flew.  
Such sight might warn e'en village swain  
That death was hovering o'er the plain  
To drench the earth with blood,  
And bid him fly and linger not  
In wonder near the parlous spot  
Where War full-ordered stood.

It thrilled the sturdy yeoman's frame  
With memories of martial fame,  
    It stirred the old desire  
To see the onset's thunder shock,  
As on the royal lines it broke,  
    In storm of wrath and fire.

With words of hurried comfort said  
He strove to cheer the startled maid ;  
Then swiftly from the room he passed,  
And bade a drowsy teamster haste  
And yoke his oxen to the wain,  
And Yorkward drive with load of gain,  
While he along the road would ride,  
And bide his coming at Nidd-side,  
Deeming such provender would gain  
Glad welcome for him on the plain.

The noontide's shimmering heats were o'er  
Ere Ralph returned from Monkton Moor,  
And told how Dayrell's midnight news  
Had drawn the Roundheads from the Ouse,  
That Rupert and the royal host  
At break of day the Ure had crossed,  
And now in Galtrees' wilds were lost ;  
How Leven of the contest rued,  
And thought to fly to Holy-Rood.  
Neighbours he met and heard them tell,  
" Bryan is with the troops and well,  
But rides not in the battle line,  
Nor seeks the coming fight to join."  
This news Ralph told the listening maid  
Beneath the ponderous chestnut shade,  
Where Janet sate and wondered long  
Why she had grown so quickly strong ;  
For Joy had tried his healing art,  
And won to health her every part.

## CHAPTER XXXV.

## A DISTANT GLIMPSE OF THE BATTLE.—HAMMER T

NIGHT brought the yeoman troubled rest ;  
The dawn was crimsoning all the east  
With threats of elemental war  
And tempests gathering from afar,  
When pacing on the hills alone  
Ralph found the glittering pageant gone ;  
Nor caske, nor pennon marked the scene  
Where yesterday's array had been,  
And naught was there of martial power  
'Twixt Marston waste and Monkton Moor.  
The noon on Bilton Bream revealed  
The troops by Wilstrop's woods concealed  
At dawn, with faces southward set  
In slow, though undisguised retreat,  
While, ranged along the hill's broad brow,  
The long bright lines of troopers shew  
Stately and still and motionless,  
As loth on Leven's track to press.

The eve on Marston's sounding waste  
In thunderous conflict fiercely passed ;  
Awhile in smoke and battle breath  
Lay hid the fiery strife of death ;  
Awhile, like thunders from the cloud,  
The earthquake roar broke deep and loud ;  
But as the combat deadlier grew,  
And throbbed the earth with onsets new,  
Failed musket peal and culverin  
In murmurs of still angrier din.

Aside the breeze the curtain drew  
 And the dread turmoil gave to view ;  
 Here rushing squadrons wildly rode,  
 And there the phalanx grimly stood ;  
 Here line 'gainst line of horse was sent,  
 As in some monstrous tournament,  
 There whirled the flashing stream of fight  
 Around the levelled spear-points bright,  
 Where, islanded amid the storm,  
 Some band forlorn held order firm ;  
 Hither and thither swayed the throng  
 Of strife supreme their ranks among,  
 Now rising to some effort vast,  
 As if the fiercest and the last,  
 Now failing with their failing breath  
 In mutual impotence for death,  
 To wake upon the further moor  
 In wilder conflict than before.  
 Though teemed the field with countless life,  
 And seethed with war and eddying strife,  
 Yet naught might maid or yeoman know  
 How went the day with friend or foe,  
 Till bursting from the twilight shade  
 By Wilstrop's towering pine-trees made,  
 Rushed frantic on their Yorkward course  
 Wrecked squadrons of the royal horse,  
 And, following fierce and resolute,  
 Pressed on the Roundheads' hot pursuit ;  
 Then knew old Ralph the day was won,  
 And ruthless Rupert all undone.

Think not the maid in silence viewed  
 The distant scene of strife and blood,  
 Or joy supreme within her breast  
 Her deep anxiety suppressed ;

For when forebodings her bosom thrilled,  
 By momentary efforts stilled,  
 If grief and pain for others' woe,  
 Though whelmed in vigorous overthrow :  
 For though in God's and Commons' call  
 Such weak seemed scorn of Nature's law  
 To earth and heaven a challenge sent  
 Fought with some future punishment ;  
 And then with pain mysterious dread  
 If trouble came unsummoned,  
 And fear that Bryan's fiery blood  
 Had scorned a peaceful attitude,  
 And in the thickest fight had played  
 Some desperate part with lance or blade,  
 And now returned with helmet riven,  
 Gazed glancing in the darkening heaven.

At length the maid her fears confessed,  
 And sigh and tear no more repressed,  
 Sad tears that welled uncertainly,  
 As if they wronged another's joy,  
 And sighs so deep they seemed afraid  
 To chide the triumph Ralph betrayed  
 In flushing cheek and quivering frame,  
 And dark eye kindling into flame,  
 As wider scattering than before  
 Swept the lost host o'er Hessay Moor,  
 And louder, ever and anon,  
 Rose the wild shouts of battle won.

Upon his arm the maiden laid  
 Her hand, and in low accents said,  
 "Haste to the moor, God's mercy speed  
 Our ruth to some poor soul in need ;  
 Perchance some friend for help is crying,  
 Perchance e'en Bryan now is dying,

And vainly bids with failing breath  
His Janet close his eyes in death."  
Her tone so pregnant with distress  
Woke Ralph to sudden consciousness,  
And to her gentle sway subdued  
The fiery triumph of his mood.

The battle plain was hid from sight  
In twilight deepening into night,  
So lone, so still—that field of blood,  
Ye might have deemed the heath-bird's brood  
Breathless in timorous silence lay  
Close sheltering from some bird of prey ;  
Ye might have deemed o'er Marston waste  
The last belated swain had passed  
An hour ago—so lone and lost  
Lay the wan wrecks of Rupert's host.

## CHAPTER XXXVI.

### THE MIDNIGHT SEARCH ON THE BATTLE-FIELD— MARSTON MOOR.

MEANWHILE old Ralph and Janet bide  
A few short moments by Nidd-side,  
Where the old weir, athwart the stream,  
Lay dark against the water's gleam,  
And shielded from the current's flow  
A line of stepping-stones below.  
From stone to stone the maiden sprung,  
Yet fearful to the yeoman clung,  
Who strongly through the shallows strode,  
And aid of hand and word bestowed ;

Till safely on the shelving sand  
The mail leapt lightly to the land ;  
Then turned the yeoman and unsling  
A flask that from his shoulder hung ;  
Dipped it deep where the stream ran pure,  
And thought as he held it of Morsum Moor,  
And that other stream that was foul with blood,  
Where the lusty rinks of the horse had stood,  
And the heather had dyed in the frenzy of strife  
With the ruddy stream of the fountain of life ;  
And the parched lips and the palsied hand  
Uselessly clenched on the shattered brand ;  
And the speechless tongue, with its dolorous tone,  
Now striving to curse, now sunk to a moan ;  
And the frame by the frenzied brain o'erstrung,  
As if by a thousand scorpions stung ;  
Tortured and wracked with a horrible pain  
Of fire that scorched as it coursed through the vein  
And poisoned the sources of weal and woe  
With the terrible curse of the mind's o'erthrow.  
Sad though it is for a foe to be  
Dying forlorn in an agony ;  
It cuts to the heart, if one of our race  
Should fall in the foremost fighting place,  
And gasp away life, when the battle is done,  
In comfortless anguish, unaided, alone.  
Old wounds bleed afresh when a kinsman is bleed-  
And scars will pulsate if a comrade be needing ;  
And Ralph knew well by his own fierce mood  
That Bryan would be where the boldest rode,  
When they charge on the stubborn ranks of death,  
And the field holds startled its bated breath,  
Or the dauntless few of some serried band  
Yield not and die on the spot where they stand.  
Was it instinct true, or an old wound pain  
That told him that Bryan lay low with the slain ?

Was it tear-drop that fell and was blent with the river  
 To mingle Earth's sadness with Ocean's for ever?  
 Was it sigh that was breathed, was it grief that was given  
 To be lost in the infinite spaces of heaven?  
 Or but sound of the swirl in its eddying flight,  
 And storm-drop that fell from the regions of night?  
 Whate'er it might be, it is past and gone,  
 And the night is still, and the stream hurries on.  
 Is it ever thus, when we grieve the most,  
 In silence and darkness our anguish is lost?  
 Is it ever the lot of our sorrow and joy  
 To fade from the earth, to be lost in the sky?  
 Or they pierce to the soul of the spirit of air,  
 And gladden or sadden with sympathy there?  
 Do they mingle with those of the spirits that quiver  
 In the fields, in the woods, on the hills, in the river  
 To smile in the flowers, to sigh in the gale,  
 Or tell in the varying ripples their tale?  
 Do they fly to the heart of the forest, and hide  
 Where the gloom never breaks, nor the dew-drops are  
     dried?  
 Do they seek the crags on the lone hill's brow  
 To grieve o'er the endless strife below?  
 I have heard, I have seen them, I know, I know.

The yeoman held the flask until  
 The stream ran o'er it smooth and still,  
 Then drew it slowly from the tide,  
 And swiftly strode to Janet's side;  
 No word, no sigh his fears confessed,  
 As up the wooded bank he pressed,  
 And soon his way in silence made  
 Through Scukirk's ancient linden shade,  
 Where Nostell's monks had framed a cell  
 Where lonely penitence might dwell,



And win by penances and prayers,  
And midnight scourging unto tears,  
Some respite from the soul's distress,  
Some peace of hope or holiness.

But now upon their ears agen  
The myriad hum of joyous men,  
In the strange after-joy of fight,  
Broke through the stillness of the night;  
And blent discordant with its tone  
Rose the hoarse shriek and dying moan,  
Fitful and fierce or faint and dread,  
As some affrighted spirit fled,  
Hopeless and helpless, swift or slow,  
In ecstasy of pain and woe.  
At length on Marston's nearer heath  
The maid and yeoman paused for breath;  
In front, great heaps of gloom were spread,  
By the low moon illumined.  
No sigh, no sound of woe or wail  
Told to the ear the dismal tale,  
How sped the conflict all too well,  
How died the fighters where they fell;  
Soundless and speechless as the tomb,  
False fantasies of midnight gloom,  
Or harvest of the summer broom,  
Left when the peasants in dismay  
Fled from Prince Rupert's fierce array;  
So Janet deemed them, though the tale  
Told but too well the moonbeams pale  
In sickly gleams that faintly shone  
From breastplate, cuisse, and morion,  
No longer gay with morning's sheen,  
But battered, bloody, and obscene.  
No marvel then the maiden failed  
To spell the tale those heaps revealed.

Meanwhile the yeoman from his store  
 Revived the lanthorn's lamp he bore,  
 And softly in an undertone  
 Whispered, "Twas here the fight begun ;  
 Be brave, and bear as best ye may  
 These gruesome relics of the fray."  
 Naught said the maiden in reply,  
 Though welled the tear-drop to her eye,  
 And to her lips in silence stole  
 The terror of her anguished soul,  
 And strove to pay with deep-drawn breath  
 His righteous tribute unto Death.

No sign, no sound of pain revealed  
 The dread and woe her awe concealed ;  
 With fixed eye on the heaps of dead  
 She followed where the yeoman led,  
 With slow mechanic step that knew  
 No power of will to dare or do.  
 Nor failed that step, nor feared to fall  
 Where deep had ploughed the plunging ball ;  
 Nor saw she on the trampled sod,  
 Where maddened chargers late had trod,  
 And the deep hoof-print in the mud  
 Welled to the brim with stream of blood ;  
 Nor knew she that the heather shed  
 A dew that on her skirt was red,  
 And the soft mire, o'er which she stept,  
 Was wet with rain clouds never wept.  
 She saw alone the helpless dead,  
 And Bryan on the heather laid,  
 Ghastly and grim and foul with gore,  
 His life and love for ever o'er.  
 It is not mine to tell how sped  
 Their mournful quest amid the dead,

Or draw aside, with hand profane,  
The veil which Night threw o'er the slain,  
And give to view, in callous mood,  
The dreary scenes that Janet viewed,  
When fell the lanthorn's sickly light  
On the wan relics of the fight.

Of all the gruesome shapes of Death  
That still the heart and stay the breath ;  
Of all the woeful signs of strife  
Left on the brow by parting life,  
When, hurled from its ancestral throne  
By sudden shock, that life has flown ;  
The fixed, though varied, lines that tell  
How the strong spirit bade farewell,  
To all the conscious pride and power  
That fall and fade in battle's hour,  
Reveal, if ought, our mortal birth ;  
How much of man belongs to Earth ;  
How much of all to mortals given  
Fades from the earth, nor reaches heaven.  
His vast capacity for pain,  
Ere fails the pulse or sleeps the brain,  
Redeems not man from sin and blot,  
Nor hides the terrors Death begot ;  
'Tis earthly all, that look of fear,  
And bears no sign that heaven is near.

For two long midnight hours, the maid  
In silence moved amid the dead,  
Scanning with quick, unerring eye,  
Each form the lanthorn's gleams descry ;  
Nor paused to seek, through falling tears,  
The sign of troth her Bryan wears ;  
Save when the visage foul forbade  
All recognition to the maid,

And limb and form alike declare  
 Some rival to her Bryan there ;  
 Then softly on the ground she knelt,  
 And meekly o'er the sword hand dwelt  
 One moment, then as softly laid  
 The strange hand on its shivered blade.  
 Yet naught of joy she dared to feel  
 When stranger hands the truth reveal ;  
 Too much suspense and awe were there,  
 Too much of terror and despair ;  
 She could not still her boding heart,  
 She could not bid her fears depart ;  
 No, though on many a chilly hand  
 Were crest and symbol of command,  
 And many a squire and 'knight and peer  
 Found on the heath unhonoured bier,  
 And many a wide domain would mourn  
 Its ancient lord on morrow's morn ;  
 What were they now but wrecks of men  
 That ne'er should rise or rule again,  
 In equal company with all  
 Who vassals came, nor feared to fall ?

For two long midnight hours the maid  
 Her search amid the dead essayed ;  
 But mostly where the thickest slain  
 Told how the bravest strove in vain ;  
 For there she deemed her Bryan fought,  
 And there would be the form she sought ;  
 Now passing with quick step and free,  
 Where squadrons charged or turned to flee,  
 And horse and rider scattered wide  
 Lay like the waifs of Ocean's tide,  
 When moonbeams break along the shore,  
 And faint and far the breakers roar,

And all that was so gay at morn  
In that proud fleet, now rent and torn,  
A battered wreckage, weird and wan,  
Lies there in silence, bark and man.

Now with more careful foot she stept,  
Where pikemen long their square had kept,  
And even lay those ranks in death,  
As when they formed upon the heath ;  
Save that a central heap disclosed,  
How fierce the conflict round them closed,  
How deep of blood the earth had drank,  
How slow the lessening phalanx shrank ;  
Till the last remnant of the band  
On comrades' corses took his stand,  
And crowned their carnage with his own,  
Unconquered still, though overthrown.  
Few were there on that bloody heath  
Who still repelled the approach of death ;  
Few, who, by effort strong or weak,  
Could force the parched tongue to speak ;  
For some did scorn to ask for aid,  
By Death or man too long delayed,  
And with set teeth and clenched hand  
Calmly confronted Death's demand,  
Undaunted, stern, and resolute,  
Hopeless of life yet proud and mute.  
But where or eye or lip appealed  
To maid or man their aid to yield ;  
Ralph of his store full freely gave,  
Their thirst to quench, their brow to lave.  
"Drink deep," he said, "it came from Nidd,  
And bear ye bravely in your need."  
"God's mercy on ye," Janet prayed,  
"God's blessing with ye and God's aid."

But few there were to ask or hear  
The yeoman's help or words of cheer ;  
The deepening silence all too well  
Tells to the ear the piteous tale,  
How fast the fallen faint and die,  
How few shall see the dawn, though day be hovering  
nigh.

## CHAPTER XXXVII.

## THE FINDING OF BRYAN—MARSTON MOOR.

OH, ye who bend a careless eye,  
When wreck and ruin flout the sky ;  
Who curl the lip and pass the sneer  
When shivering Want lets fall the tear,  
Or shuddering Anguish wrings her hand  
At sight of idle spear or brand ;  
Ye who would pass the jovial toast  
While Widowhood still mourns the lost,  
Or trim the tune to wanton air  
Whilst young Affliction breeds despair ;  
Ye too who pass with lightsome tread  
Where fallen heroes found a bed,  
Nor heed the voices, low and still,  
The reverential air that thrill  
With sorrowing Nature's mournful strain  
For her best sons at Youth-tide slain ;  
Whene'er ye praise your liberty,  
Oh, think of England's agony,  
And, ere ye draw the sword again,  
Oh, shed one pitying tear on Marston's dreary plain.  
But now the fruitless quest and vain  
Revives the maiden's hope again ;

Though still, with unknown dread oppress,  
She strives to calm her troubled breast,  
Her heart, rebellious and too true,  
Resents the treachery Hope would do ;  
Though, wider scattered than before,  
The wreckage on the Western moor  
Told her the task was all but o'er.

Upon the bank, where Leven stood  
And early of the contest rued,  
They stand at length,—the pale moonbeam  
Cast sickly splendours on the stream,  
That gleamed not as a stream should gleam,  
But lurid, ghastly, as the light  
From blood-stained corselet gleams at night.  
Beyond the stream a charger stood,  
And by him, stretched upon the sod,  
A trooper lay, whose clenched hand  
Still o'er the bridle held command,  
And bade, though motionless he lay,  
The steed that master-hand obey.  
As Ralph drew near with hurried stride  
The affrighted charger swerved aside,  
And strove to free himself in vain,  
Till the quick knife had cleft the rein ;  
Then in wild terror, free and light,  
He left for aye the scene of fight ;  
And though in frenzied haste of fear,  
His feet ne'er touched the carnage near,  
But deftly 'twixt the corses wound,  
Or cleared them in his frantic bound ;  
So much of natural deference  
For man is in the brutish sense.

But why aghast the yeoman stands,  
Nor finds e'en strength to wring his hands ?



Why motionless as pillared stone,  
Or the wan form he looks upon ?  
His bold, strong speech,—what ails it now ?  
It cannot frame e'en sound of woe,  
Nor tell the prostrate trooper's fate  
In tones e'en inarticulate.  
He seemed as one entranced, that lies  
'Twixt life and his last obsequies,  
Conscious of all he last had done,  
And all he last had gazed upon,  
Yet lost to earth, and doubly lone.

Of all the powers that Nature gives  
To shield or arm our fragile lives,  
None in that hour of woe withstood  
The frigid touch that chills the blood.  
E'en though his eye had read the tale  
Told by the trooper's visage pale,  
It saw not what it gazed upon ;  
All sense of outward things was gone,  
Save the first glimpse his lamp revealed  
Of all he feared, till now concealed  
From his own heart, by confidence  
In Bryan's martial competence.  
No tremor stirred the stagnant brain  
With consciousness of ill or pain ;  
No thing of earth found entrance there,  
Where all was vacant, dark despair,  
And sense of loss and hopelessness  
Crushing all things to nothingness.  
Of future times and past he thought,  
The deeds his sturdy line had wrought,  
Told by Tradition's rustic tongue  
In many a village tale and song,  
For Freedom's cause in civil strife,  
Or 'gainst the Scot for home and life ;



The dauntless fights his sires maintained,  
The Yorkshire fields their blood had stained ;  
Yet issued when the strife was o'er  
Their race still sturdier than before.  
But now their latest fight was fought,  
Their line in Bryan brought to naught ;  
And cheerless days of hopeless age  
Were Ralph's and Godfrey's heritage.

'Twas but a momentary gleam,  
A lurid glow on Memory's stream,  
A spell that broke, a charm that fled  
As Janet passed with hurried tread,  
And, kneeling by the trooper's side,  
In low despairing accents cried,  
" 'Tis Bryan, Bryan, Bryan dead,  
And I not here to soothe his need."  
The name, the tone, so sad and low,  
Woke Ralph to consciousness of woe ;  
Yet still as in a dream he moved,  
Nor word nor deed his waking proved ;  
Though Janet, mournfully and slow,  
Undid the casque and bared the brow,  
And searched each lineament in turn  
For sign of hope or life's return ;  
He only saw that Bryan lay  
Lifeless and pale 'neath the lanthorn's ray ;  
And he thought how strange the strife had been  
To have left his harness so bright and clean ;  
Cuisses, cuirass, and morion,  
Spotless with morning's brightness shone ;  
Spotless the gauntlet on his hand,  
And spotless, too, the naked brand ;  
Dinted it was from point to hilt,  
But bore no trace of life-blood spilt ;

Ye would have said 'twas meant to shield  
Some standard-bearer through the field,  
And take, not give the vengeful blow  
That lays the stubborn foeman low,

Ralph marvelled why was Bryan there,  
When all his harness gleamed so fair,  
And naught of blood proved angry strife,  
Or valiant contest waged for life.  
But, ere the dinted comb he saw,  
Or nearer to the maid could draw,  
Who gently bathed the pallid brow,  
A sigh, scarce audible so low  
And distant e'en to lover's ear,  
An offspring false of hope or fear,  
Or last farewell by life bequeathed  
It seemed, from Bryan's lips was breathed.  
Again it came, a gentle breath,  
'Twas now no harbinger of death ;  
And yet again, like angel sent  
From heaven to win the tenement  
From Death, and give new life, alas !  
How faintly sweet, how low it was.

Whilst Janet raised his drooping head,  
Ralph smoothed the heath that formed his bed ;  
With knife gave chest and limbs release  
From thong of stout cuirass and cuisse,  
Then bade the maid be brave of heart,  
And ply lovè's skill and healing art,  
And he would seek some neighbouring post,  
And bring relief, whate'er it cost.  
He placed the lanthorn where its gleam  
Might full on Bryan's visage stream ;

Marked where the camp-fires brightest glowed,  
And nearest aid, though distant, shewed ;  
And then with more than youthful haste  
Into the darkness swiftly passed.

### CHAPTER XXXVIII.

#### THE LONELY WATCH—MARSTON MOOR.

THINK not that Janet knew no fear,  
Alone mid Marston's carnage drear,  
Though steeled to bear for Bryan's sake  
Such scenes as War alone can wake,  
And follow with a dauntless tread  
Where venturous Hope her footsteps led ;  
Though bold to bear when love enjoined  
All perils of an earthly kind,  
And still to outward peace and calm  
All her foreboding fears of harm,  
The maiden now to her own breast  
Her loneliness at length confessed,  
And seemed to hear in sky and air  
The wailings of a wild despair.  
A thousand ghostly shapes of fear  
Seemed hovering o'er the corse near ;  
A thousand tongues their anguish spell,  
A thousand sprites their parting tell,  
A thousand shapes—a thousand tongues,  
Each at her ear its grief prolongs.  
Yet still she laved her Bryan's head,  
Her loving hands their service paid ;  
And oft she whispered Bryan's name,  
When the foul terrors nearer came

And strove her Bryan's form to grasp  
And tear it from her frantic clasp.  
And oft she said, 'twixt hope and fear,  
"Ralph comes at last, e'en now is near,  
Bryan, awake !" A faint low sigh  
Was all her Bryan deigned reply ;  
So deathly pale, so still he lay,  
She often deemed him passed away.  
Yet still she whispered, still she laved  
His pallid brow, her terrors braved ;  
And still all power she felt or knew  
She summoned to her task anew,  
And prayed, if throbbing hope be prayer  
That, wordless, borders on despair,  
For strength to bear whate'er of ill  
God's ruth or wrath should deign to will,  
Ere Ralph succeeded in his quest,  
Or dawn her wearying watch released.

And now, upon the nearer moor,  
Sounds seem to say her watch is o'er,  
And heard her prayer, beyond belief.  
"Ralph comes," she said. "He brings relief."  
Nearer they come, but not with haste  
Of those who speed the succour fast,  
And deem their aid is all too slow  
To save or shield or friend or foe ;  
But halting and with stealthy tread,  
As those who spoil the helpless dead,  
And shame the placid eye of Night  
With scenes her ruth would hide from sight.  
No word of hope, no sigh reveals  
The grief and pain that Pity feels ;  
But muttered curse in words unknown,  
And horrid jest at random thrown

At some wan form whose gentle birth  
Assurance gave of spoil and mirth.  
Nearer and nearer, one by one,  
Ten dusky forms crept slowly on ;  
She saw them bend above the dead,  
She saw them try a rapier's blade,  
She saw the poignard gleam in air,  
She heard the shriek of some last despair,  
And the moan of the roused and all but dead,  
And the choking sob when the spirit fled,  
And the sullen thud that provoked no cry,  
The only sound of the dead's reply ;  
And silent she sate, and they crept more nigh.  
They crept more nigh at their horrid trade,  
Ransacking like ghouls the forms of the dead ;  
Nigh and more nigh, till a lance's thrust  
Would have laid the foremost a corse in the dust ;  
And the miscreant held in his blood-stained hand  
A dagger that dripped with red drops on the sand  
And his eye glowed red with a murderous gleam  
As his dagger's point in the lanthorn's beam,  
Or the ravenous glare of a wolf on the steppe,  
When the frantic steeds through the snow-drifts lea  
And the flash of the carbine reveals on the track  
The famine-fired glow in the eyes of the pack,  
And the doom that is there, and the frenzy to kill,  
Ere they leap on the sleigh, and the snow-plain is s

If ever the maiden thought to fly  
Ere the fiendish crew had crept more nigh,  
Or to weep and pray on her bended knee  
Till their hearts should melt for her agony,  
That thought has passed like a dew-drop dried,  
Or the useless rain on the ocean wide,  
And has left no trace of fear or prayer  
In the eye that was dim with the tears that were the

That eye is dry, it is all aglow  
With a frenzy that dares all that valour can do ;  
For a spark of that terrible gleam has caught  
And fired her brain with its murderous thought.  
She thinks not of death, but of vengeance alone,  
And the life that the miscreant must buy with his own ;  
And the flush of wrath is on brow and cheek,  
And her lips are pale, and they may not speak.

Across the prostrate form she sprung,  
The sword from Bryan's hand she wrung,  
And fiercely in despair  
Swung high above her head the blade  
To wreak her vengeance, undismayed,  
On all who ventured there ;  
And o'er her helpless lover's breast,  
With foot upon his cuirass pressed,  
She stood, and reckless of her fate,  
With dauntless look, though desolate,  
Returned the murderer's glare of hate ;  
While still on high her gleaming hand  
Tighter and tighter gripped the brand.

The ruffian paused and mutely stood,  
Astounded at her hardihood  
To dare his strength and skill,  
And sidelong cast his furtive glance,  
Where coward blow might find some chance  
To work his ruthless will.  
But nearer now his comrades press,  
And, scoffing, praise his manfulness ;  
Some say a lion in the path  
Is less to fear than woman's wrath ;  
And some the strife will not be long  
If he but try his soldier's tongue.

But one, relenting and ashamed,  
The ruffian's savage instincts blamed ;  
" 'Tis but a helpless maid," he said,  
" Who watches by her lover dead ;  
What prize were ours the maid to slay,  
And spoil the dead of promised pay ?  
While many a squire and knight and peer  
Cumber the moor in costly gear ;  
And one gay cavalier, I wis,  
Is worth a hundred forms like this ;  
Leave thou the maid her sole relief,  
To nurse unharmed her hopeless grief.

Their greed but not their pity won,  
And left the deed of shame undone ;  
One after one, with sullen tread  
They turned to spoil the richer dead ;  
Though backward oft through the silent gloom  
Came the muttered curse and the threat of doom,  
Ere greed of gain had resumed her sway,  
And the ruthless band had pursued their way.  
E'en now from the useless and heavy brand  
The terror-struck maid relaxed not her hand,  
But stood as carved in Parian stone,  
Pallid and still and woe-begone ;  
And the tears welled fast from her throbbing brain  
Like lava drops, and they fell like rain,  
And dimmed the cuirass with a burning stain.

But other sound than the murderer's tread,  
Or the murderer's scoff as he struck the dead,  
Strong volumed as a wintry stream,  
Broke many a wearied sleeper's dream,  
'Twixt Hessay waste and Bilton Bream.  
'Twas the triumph song of the stern-browed host  
O'er the well-won fight, ere they counted the cost ;

Full and loud and terrible,  
From a thousand throats did that triumph swell ;  
Yet somewhat was there as it rose to the sky,  
Stern and austere and not all joy,  
Like the distant tone of the burial knell  
Mingling with notes of the marriage bell,  
An undertone of relentless doom,  
Or the echoing tread on a recent tomb ;  
Something to fear of resistless might  
That darkens life's day with a foretaste of night.

They came in their splendour  
Of banner and sword,  
All proudly defiant,  
The foes of the Lord.

In countless battalions  
Of terrible might,  
As a flood in the summer  
Comes flashing and bright,

Their chiefs to the onset  
In panoply rode,  
They rushed on His chosen,  
They warfared with God ;

With threats to the conflict  
Thy foemen did come,  
They dreamed of a conquest,  
They found but a tomb.

For the thunders of God  
Awoke on the heath,  
And their triumph is hushed  
In the silence of death ;



And their pride, pomp, and splendour  
Lie low where they fell,  
They warfared with heaven,  
Their fall was to hell.

'Twas the valour of earth  
That came in array,  
'Tis the arm of the Lord  
That has swept it away.

Like chaff in the balance  
Their tale has been told,  
Thou hast weighed them for vengeance,  
Thy wrath uncontrolled

In tempests has hurled them,  
Awestruck, from thy sight  
To the deserts of sorrow  
And blackness of night.

Thy saints are unworthy,  
Thy chosen are few,  
To Thee the great triumph  
Of battle is due.

Their warriors, at noontide,  
All gleaming and gay,  
Came flushed for the onset,  
And keen for the fray ;

With prancings exultant,  
Tyrannic they rode,  
Despising the saints  
And chosen of God.

They thronged to the conflict,  
Like giants of Gath ;  
But the lion of Judah  
Confronted their path ;

And the spoiler is spoiled,  
The strong are a prey,  
And the legions of Satan  
Are vanished away.

'Twas Jehovah in wrath  
That breathed on their pride,  
And like grass from the reaper  
They withered and died.

Their banners, late flying  
In challenge and scorn,  
Dishonoured are lying  
All bloody and torn !

For the strong God of battle  
Set foot on the plain,  
And the hosts of the mighty  
Lie trampled and slain.

Thou hast trodden the wine-press,  
Thy garments are red,  
And the track of thy treading  
Is cumbered with dead.

Thy people are ransomed,  
The captives released,  
And the bondage of Israel  
To Satan has ceased ;

Thine then be the praises  
By mortals bestowed,  
Jehovah, Defender,  
Avenger and God.

## CHAPTER XXXIX.

## THE SUCCOUR—MARSTON MOOR.

DID the maiden join in that fierce acclaim?  
Did her bosom swell, was her eye aflame?  
Did she thank her God that the echoing plain  
Was cumbered with heaps of the countless slain?  
And her Bryan lay low on the trampled sod,  
An offering meet for the triumph of God;  
His love and his life at his youth-tide given,  
Like a martyred saint's in the service of heaven?  
Did she brandish on high his sword agen,  
And give to that psalm a fierce amen?  
If her heart was aflame when that psalm begun,  
It is chilly now, it is heavy as stone;  
And the brand has slipt from her failing hold,  
And her face is hid in her garment's fold;  
For a vision of marshalled armies rose,  
And the plain was thronged with confronting foes;  
And squadrons charged with their swords in air  
On the levelled pikes of the stubborn square,  
And a form she knew was the Wrath of God  
In awful haste through the battle strode;  
And the ranks were rent and the column reeled,  
As the Avenger swept unseen through the field;  
For where'er he passed on the teeming heath,  
The lustiest ranks took the hue of death;

And the boldest flagged in his headlong course  
And reeled and sank on the heather a corse ;  
And the eye that had glowed with the frenzy of fight  
One moment before, is now glassy and bright ;  
And the flush of war's passion and pride on the brow  
Of the young and the strong ; oh, where is it now ?  
It was gone ere the currents of life were chilled,  
Ere the breath waxed faint and the heart was stilled ;  
For full athwart the onset's path  
Was the Avenger's form, the terror of wrath ;  
His red right arm was uplifted high,  
And it deigned not to strike, though the stricken  
die ;  
For a deadly ray from that right hand shone,  
Like the sword-gleam on high ere the death stroke is  
done ;  
And, where'er that light on the battle fell,  
It benumbed all life, and doomed it to hell.  
Full many a form, that the maid had passed  
In her dismal search o'er the bloody waste,  
She saw in his splendour of strength and pride ;  
But the gleam fell there and he fainted and died.  
It fell where a squadron scoured the plain,  
And the field was hid by the heaps of slain ;  
It fell where the foe in phalanx was blent,  
And the ranks with a sudden gap were rent ;  
It fell where the onset claimed the fight,  
And its leaders rushed from the field in flight ;  
And, horror of horrors, amid the storm  
As the maiden espied her lover's form,  
It fell where her Bryan rode unharmed,  
And bore through the battle a life that was charmed ;  
It hovered anear, yet it touched him not,  
And her eyes like a statue's were fixed on the spot ;  
Yet she marked no trace of life-blood spilt  
On harness or blade from the point to the hilt ;

But nearer it came where his sabre shone,  
And it touched the comb of his morion ;  
And she saw no more,—on her lover's breast  
From her horrid dream she has found a rest.

Deem not the maid beneath thy ruth,  
If anguish stilled the voice of truth,  
And, by such torturing fears assailed,  
For one short hour her reason failed ;  
Or go to thyself, and stand alone  
At midnight when the fight is won,  
Where countless heaps of newly slain  
Cumber the solitary plain,  
And brethren of one race and blood  
Have late opposed in battle stood,  
And grappled unto death, if thou  
Can'st gaze with an unruffled brow  
On one the dearest of thy kin,  
The best, the bravest of thy line,  
Who fell, whate'er the cause might be,  
In youth-tide's morn of gallantry,  
And found, when life was at its best,  
A mournful, though an honoured rest ;  
Thou art not human, but of baser mould,  
And thy dull heart is doubly dark and cold,  
If thou art awed not to revere,  
Nor moved to shed one tribute tear  
O'er life and hopes too early spent,  
And kindred ties so rudely rent.

The dawn had spread her fringe of gold  
Along the dark and distant wold,  
And high o'er Wilstrop's gloomy shade  
On countless sparkling dew-drops played ;  
And, settling on the voiceless plain,  
Revealed the heaps of stiffening slain,

Ere Ralph, by anxious fears distraught,  
In trembling haste the succour brought,  
Cursing, as still he hurried on,  
His youthful speed and vigour gone ;  
While, following fast though far behind,  
Toiled waggoner and village hind,  
Urged by his loud encouragement,  
And action still more eloquent,  
To think of naught but Bryan laid  
In faint forlorn and all but dead.  
For Ralph had traversed o'er and o'er  
With hurried strides the bloody moor,  
And sought for aid, where'er the light  
Of camp-fires glimmered on the night ;  
Yet none had found, the weary host  
In slumber deep as death was lost.  
So fierce, so fast the strife had sped,  
He might have tried to wake the dead  
With equal hope, as break the spell  
Of weariness invincible,  
Or stir with pity's faint appeal  
Hearts echoing with the trumpet's peal ;  
And if, despairing of his quest,  
Ralph roused some trooper from his rest,  
The slumberer deemed him royal foe,  
And, still in sleep, aimed random blow,  
And, muttering Rupert's dreaded name,  
Burned for a while with martial flame,  
Then sighed and sunk to rest again,  
Heedless and helpless as the slain.

Nor might the yeoman succour find  
Till far the field was left behind,  
And Scukirk's wakeful hinds had known  
His grief, and made it all their own.

'T were piteous task to tell aright  
The direful scene dawn gave to light,  
As reverently the peasants bore  
Their listless burdens from the moor.  
How all too well the fiends had fared,  
Who fought not, yet the spoil had shared,  
And shameless wrought their ruthless deeds of shame  
On friend and foe alike, whate'er their worth or fame,  
And left in ghastly whiteness there,  
To blacken in the summer air,  
The forms of England's noblest, born  
To better heritage than morn  
From Marston's bloody eve, or Scottish murderers'  
scorn.

## CHAPTER XL.

## THE DEFENCE—KNARESBURGH.

*November.*

DARK month and drear of fading leaves,  
Of misty rains and dripping eaves,  
Few are thy gifts and scant thy boon  
Thou comest late yet all too soon ;  
Dark-browed, dull-eyed, and in distress,  
Forlorn and all but penniless,  
A beggar friend, thou needs must come,  
And cast thy shadow on our home.  
Thy sister months of elder birth  
Have shared the gathered stores of earth,  
Her flowers and fruits and sunny days,  
Her cheerful moods and joyous ways,  
And left thee naught but crimson clouds,  
When thy brief day the twilight shrouds,

And phantom armies throng the west,  
Crimson and gold from hoof to crest,  
And marshalled ride with banners high  
To onset, join the strife and fly.  
A fading tinge of gold and blood  
Lingers awhile on copse and wood ;  
And on the hedgerows, spare and thin,  
Bright bryony and eglantine,  
Like gems on wan old age and sere,  
Glow but to make decay more drear.  
A solitary throistle sings  
The requiem of fading things.  
Not now he makes the woodland ring  
    With love-song from the hawthorn spray,  
Not now in dalliance on the wing,  
    As erst in amorous summer day,  
The cushat sweeps in headlong flight,  
And seeks the towering woods at night.  
    Earth, ravished and forlorn,  
    Ere thou wast born,  
Has naught for thee, November, but her scorn,  
    And angry frown  
O'er field and moorland thrown,  
And rush and wrathful cries of waters struggling down.  
And if, perchance, the Indian summer come,  
And deck awhile the faint and failing year ;  
'Tis but to gild its passage to the tomb,  
And fall as sunbeams on a pauper's bier.

Still o'er the frowning precipice  
In wind and storm the standard flies  
    Defiant as of yore,  
When Rupert, with the heart of fire,  
And all the power of Lancashire,  
    To York their succour bore ;



That standard, when the gale has ceased,  
Droops heavy to unhonoured rest

Around the towering mast ;  
Sullen and sad and still and cold,  
Its weather-stained and dripping fold,  
And darkened hue and tarnished gold  
Are symbols all may read who will  
To church and throne of coming ill,

And their disastrous past.  
Still on the topmost turret-tower,  
In mist and gloom and driving shower,

The silent warder stands,  
With ear attent for hostile sound,  
And keen eye on the woods around

For prowling rebel bands.  
For leaguered York, relieved in vain,  
Was lost too well on Marston plain ;  
Too high had been the battle's cost,  
Too far had fled the ruined host,

Kenaresburgh may not hope  
With her thinned garrison to share  
The toil and chance of open war,

Or with Lord Fairfax cope.  
Tickhill, his own of ancient right,  
Is lost to Charles without a fight,

And Helmsley, sore beset,  
Despairing strives to rend in twain  
The leaguer's ever-tightening chain,  
Or shun the closing net.

Still free her gates, her ramparts strong,  
Though near the foe, and menaced long,  
Though challenge oft has Knaresburgh flung.

Yet Fairfax cometh late :  
With stern, precautionary care,  
She silent guards her for the war,

Doubles her guards, and, all aware,  
Bides patiently her fate.  
Sullen and stern, each soldier's eye  
Reflects the gloom of earth and sky ;  
His thoughts their colour take and tone  
From the dark scenes he dwells upon ;  
Past, present, future, all unkind,  
Have made November in his mind,  
And stifled, ere they come to birth,  
All sounds of careless joy or mirth ;  
Alone his clanging tread  
Upon the rampart's path of stone  
Mingles in dismal unison  
With roar and wrath of Nidd.

But Peril frames in hour of need  
Fit instrument for desperate deed,  
Equips him as she deemeth best  
With weapons and thrice shielded breast ;  
And, foremost in that drooping band,  
Stern Godfrey takes unsought command.  
'Tis he, though swiftest to obey,  
And duty to his chief to pay,  
Who first his comrades' changeful mood  
To sullen loyalty subdued ;  
'Tis he who shamed them from despair,  
And bore of toil a triple share ;  
Who tamed with scorn their fear, and shewed  
Its meannesses and turpitude ;  
Who taught them, by his tales of war,  
When most was lost, then most to dare ;  
Who schooled the townsmen for the fight,  
And trode the wall on stormiest night ;  
Who scoured the roads and hamlets near,  
And heard all news there was to hear.

Each day his brow became more stern,  
His eye with fiercer fire did burn ;  
Nor ever smile his visage vext,  
Nor word of hope his lips perplexed ;  
The spirit of the time and place  
Seemed mirrored all in Godfrey's face.  
He only lived, if it were life,  
To wage with death relentless strife ;  
He only lived for peril's joy,  
To foremost fight, and, when men fly,  
To stay the latest, and to die.

It was a frenzy of the brain  
Beyond the power of hope to heal,  
That ever, since on Marston plain  
Bryan had sunk beneath his steel,  
Had made his better reason reel ;  
And Godfrey is as one accurst  
With an unconquerable thirst  
For peril, careless of the fate  
That follows peril, soon or late.  
Yet, when on midnight watch he stood,  
And the chill wind did cool his blood,  
And calm the fever of his brow,  
And stay his throbbing pulse enow,  
Some part of his old self returned,  
And for his daughter's love he yearned ;  
And much it soothed his weary heart,  
And forced the unseen tear to start,  
To feel, whate'er of ill befell  
To him, that all with her was well ;  
A niece by kin, her loss and ill  
Would make a kinship closer still ;  
And Janet be, thus doubly safe,  
A daughter to his brother Ralph.

The long suspense at length is o'er,  
And Rumour's tale is false no more ;  
Lord Fairfax comes ; at dawn of day  
The warder spied his long array  
Defiling on the Yorkward way  
From the grey woods that bound the plain,  
And mark Mauleverer's wide domain.  
Squadrons in front of yeomen rode ;  
Behind, two thousand Scotsmen strode,  
With many a lumbering culverin  
And wain of warlike stores between.  
Such sight might warn e'en Godfrey's heart  
He played at best a hopeless part.  
But Knaresburgh hears the summons sent  
To yield town, tower, and battlement,  
With all her store for siege or strife,  
And, unresisting, beg for life,  
Nor think to bar the Commons' path,  
Or meet Lord Fairfax in his wrath ;  
For they who dare the people's will  
Must feel the very last of ill.  
She hears the challenge, sharp and stern,  
And firm defiance gives in turn ;  
Let Fairfax take whate'er he can,  
'Tis but a Scot's or rebel's plan ;  
And they who have, whate'er the cost,  
May keep it till their treasure's lost ;  
Let Fairfax come in soldier's guise,  
But dream not of a bloodless prize.

And now on wall and barricade  
Bursts forth the furious cannonade ;  
The lines are ranged, the rampart manned,  
And Godfrey leads the foremost band  
That holds the outwork, where was pressed  
The chief assault and deadliest,

Scorning the storm of shell and ball,  
Silent he treads the bastion wall ;  
But when the foe had crept more nigh,  
And each might read his foeman's eye ;  
He bade the musketeers bestow  
One volley on the crowding foe,  
Then seize the ready pike or blade,  
And bide the onset unaffrayed.  
Already up the slope they press,  
Assured of all too quick success ;  
When Godfrey o'er the rampart sprung,  
And high in air his long-sword swung ;  
And following fast, the little band,  
Where'er they saw his gleaming brand,  
Leapt fiercely on the main attack,  
And bore it full a furlong back.

Thrice came the onset, thrice it stayed,  
And reeled beneath stern Godfrey's blade,  
And sullen from the path he cleft  
Recoiled, and broke to right and left.  
Once more it came, a wider tide,  
Threatening retreat from either side ;  
A fuller, deeper stream it came,  
And nerved to valour by its shame ;  
It came scarce pausing in its course  
O'er many a cloven helm and corse  
Of comrade too precipitate,  
Or wise to shun the stroke too late.  
The levelled pikes in triple row,  
Impervious to his thrust or blow,  
Bear back strong Godfrey foot by foot,  
Facing the foe, and resolute  
To chill the ardour of pursuit,  
And give his friends from hopeless fight  
A respite brief for hurried flight.

Slowly the bastion wall is won,  
Slowly the levelled pikes press on.  
Unbroken still, and thus assured  
Of every step their line secured ;  
For none would be the first to dare  
The desperate chance of Godfrey's war.

And now the church is safely won,  
Where bends the pathway of retreat ;  
And Godfrey deems his task is done,  
Till, glancing up the climbing street,  
He sees the wounded toiling still  
In painful labour up the hill ;  
And well he knows their flight is vain,  
If once the hostile tide should break,  
And freely in pursuit might strain,  
And Scottish vengeance seek.  
One moment's doubt, 'twas not of dread,  
One hurried glance is upward thrown ;  
Two saints are kneeling overhead,  
Deep graven in the stone ;  
And on the buttress front he reads  
The very prayer his spirit needs ;  
"CHRIST WHO DIED UPON THE ROOD,\*  
GRANT US GRACE OUR END BE GOOD."  
'Tis the best prayer, unsaid, unheard,  
That Christian warrior ever stirred ;  
And Godfrey at the buttress foot  
Stands dauntless, calm, and resolute.

\* On the south-west buttress of the parish church of Knaresborough this inscription, graven in the stone, about ten feet from the ground, may still be read.

## CHAPTER XLI.

## THE SURRENDER—KNARESBURGH.

AGAINST the western buttress stone  
Stern Godfrey stands, and stands alone ;  
The pikes press on, more nigh, more nigh ;  
And the onset waits,—they will see him die ;  
Girt in by the closing lines of steel,  
'Tis too late to fly, too late to appeal ;  
They will see him die—that barbarous band,  
With a hundred pikes they will meet one brand ;  
They will see him die by some coward thrust ;  
They will trample his corse like a hound's in the dust.  
But now stern Godfrey's blade is plied,  
And strongly sweeps the pikes aside ;  
But they close again, ere the breach can be tried ;  
They are closer now, but the rank is riven  
With a sudden start, ere the death-thrust is given ;  
Guy Dayrell has come—at the outlaw's sign  
To right and left do the ranks decline,  
And the spears, that were urgent one moment ago,  
Still sullenly levelled, all backward go.  
Deftest of swordsmen they know him to be ;  
And the ground is clear and his right arm free ;  
For none, when Guy Dayrell is seeking the fray,  
Would dare to assist, or make easy the way.  
Hushed is their triumph shout awhile,  
And their savage lips have relaxed to a smile,  
As, breathless and watchful, they stand around  
For the first and haply the only wound ;  
For few that had felt Guy Dayrell's sword  
Could even breath for a prayer afford.

With levelled blade against blade opposed,  
Guy Dayrell and stern Godfrey closed ;  
The outlaw pressing his foeman's guard ;  
The yeoman intent his blows to ward,  
Seeking to hold his opponent at bay,  
And win for his comrades a moment's delay.  
Sudden and fierce was Guy Dayrell's stroke,  
But harmless from Godfrey's blade it broke :  
Again and again,—'tis too quick for the eye  
To follow its course, yet it came not nigh ;  
For deft is the hand that has turned it by.  
His deadliest stroke he has tried in vain ;  
Ne'er fell it before, but to add to the slain ;  
But it flashed in flame down the parrying blade,  
And only a dint on the cuisses made ;  
Again and again,—he is dazed to find  
A foe that fathoms his innermost mind,  
And knows where the coming blow will fall,  
And the thought, ere it issue in act, to forestall  
With the ready blade ; ye would deem one will  
Nerved the arm that would ward and the hand that  
    would kill  
With an equal care and an equal skill  
To peril or guard, in deadly strife,  
One priceless treasure, one common life.

Though fast and fierce the outlaw pressed  
His onset with never a moment's rest ;  
Yet with each quick successive shock,  
With each foiled and failing stroke,  
Like a dream forgot that awakes again,  
Step by step, with slow effort and pain,  
Piece by piece, a mosaic of thought  
From the long-hid store of his memory brought,  
Grew into a picture, dim and faint  
As the form, through some minster aisle, of a saint ;



Ye know not what is in any part,  
Yet the whole is clear—'tis the maker's heart.  
Piece by piece, as Guy Dayrell fought,  
Came unsummoned the fragments of thought.  
Piece by piece to a picture was wrought;

He knows not how,  
Of this very strife and this very foe,  
Somewhere met—but it tells no more—  
He has passed through the selfsame contest before.  
But the outlaw sweeps the thought aside  
With a stubborn effort of reckless pride;  
He will have no dreams to palsy his will,  
Or benumb his arm with foreboding of ill;  
With a sudden stroke he has reached his foe,  
He has shorn the caske from stern Godfrey's brow;  
Another blow of such vengeful might  
Will have won for Guy Dayrell his sternest fight;  
But horror has frozen his wakeful eye  
To an awful look of mute agony;  
His vigilant glance is a glassy stare  
On his foeman's brow and the scar that is there;  
Suddenly numb are his limbs, and his brain  
For a moment is dead with the shock of its pain;  
His cheek is blenched, and the listless brand  
Droops in the grasp of his nerveless hand;  
Nerveless to fight, to fly, or to pray,  
He can only stand while his foe shall slay.  
"O God, it is Godfrey," was all he said,  
As crashed on his helmet that foeman's blade;  
Ungroaning, unsighing, he sinks to rest,  
Cloven through morion and skull to the chest.

The pikes press on, they close around,  
They can pierce unharmed, they can safely wound,  
And wreak their wrath on the stubborn foe  
Who has laid their boldest of leaders low.

A score of pikes are in Godfrey's breast,  
'Through the gaps in his jointed harness pressed ;  
He has reeled, he has fallen to rise no more,  
His life with its love and its sorrow is o'er ;  
His patience of hope, his foreboding of ill,  
His dauntless courage, his martial skill  
And frenzy of fear and shame are past,  
And the burdened heart is released at last.

What avails it now that Fairfax hears  
The prowess of those ruthless spears,  
With more than shame, a soldier's scorn  
Of triumph o'er a foe outworn ?  
'Tis vain, regret for Dayrell now,  
Or soldier's pity for his foe ;  
What 'vails his tear o'er Dayrell shed,  
Or blush of shame for Godfrey dead ?  
Too late to shield, too late to save,  
They still may have one common grave.  
He bids his yeoman band prepare  
    A fitting grave, where Godfrey fell,  
    That they who fought and died so well,  
Though foes in life, in death may share,  
    As friends, one common cell.

With tender hands they laid them down,  
As they were friends who ne'er had known  
    Aught worse than brother's love ;  
Their monument, the buttress stone,  
Their epitaph, the prayer thereon,  
    Already writ above ;  
" CHRIST WHO DIED UPON THE ROOD,  
GRANT US GRACE OUR END BE GOOD."  
There, side by side, unmourned, unwept,  
Two truer comrades never slept.

Seven weeks of weary waiting o'er  
For succour that will never come,  
With dwindled ranks and vanished store,  
And standard struck to float no more,

Kenaresburgh meets her doom ;  
The drawbridge falls, the gate is wide,  
Where once hot Randolph stood defied,  
And Douglas, hurling curses vain,  
Recoiled to fire the town again.

But now the Scots in order stand  
In triple ranks on either hand,  
While slowly from the gateway's gloom,  
By famine tamed, not rebel brand,  
The careworn remnants of the band,

Sullen and silent, come.

Behind those ranks the townsfolk crowd,  
Still, motionless and sullen-browed ;  
And many a friend is there to greet  
The friend he nevermore shall meet ;  
And many a cheek grows deadly pale,  
While reads the eye the dismal tale  
That thin line tells, as fares it on  
Slowly, yet passing all too soon.

Uncertain, mute, of doubtful mood,  
As if by prescient fears pursued,  
Pale from prolonged and weary strife  
With varying sickness for his life,  
Stands Bryan, once of stalwart frame,  
But nerveless now with inward shame.  
He came the first, when spread the news  
Of Knaresburgh's fall, from Nidd to Ouse,  
And nearest to the moat took post,  
And keenest scanned the line that crossed ;  
One arm about his Janet flung  
To guard her form from careless wrong,

Half his unconscious care confessing,  
And half her hope and fear caressing,  
Might tell, with thrill precipitate,  
When Godfrey passed the castle gate.  
But line on line has come and gone,  
And Godfrey comes not, late or soon ;  
The last of all the haggard crew  
Has passed the gloomy portal through,  
And still no Godfrey. Can it be  
His pride disdained such sight to see,  
Or, sick with wounds or watches lying,  
Within the walls he now is dying ?

With friendly guides, who knew it well,  
They searched the keep, each room, and cell,  
Dungeon and den and lady's bower,  
From basement stone to turret tower,  
In silent converse with their fear,  
That left no room for word or tear ;  
Till, issuing in the freer air,  
They felt confronted with despair,  
And Bryan asked, in trembling tone,  
If a scarred veteran were known,  
With careworn look and locks of gray,  
And surely foremost in the fray,  
Or last in flight ; he asked no more ;  
His guides such pitying aspect wore ;  
Then told the tale, with bated breath,  
Of Godfrey's and the outlaw's death ;  
And shewed the grave the foemen share,  
And, pitying sorrow, left them there.

Here falls the veil on vain regret  
And sorrow in bereavement met ;  
Too sacred is the mourner's sigh  
To bear e'en sympathy too nigh ;

And tears that fall on grave or bier  
Bid Pity come not over near.  
In after years, a yeoman, gray  
And grave beyond the years he bore,  
Would ever come on Marston day,  
And silent tell his memories o'er ;  
And by his side a matron staid,  
Three sturdy boys and little maid  
    With wondering looks would stand ;  
While points their sire to buttress stone,  
And bids them read the prayer thereon,  
    And holding hand in hand  
To promise by the love they bear,  
As recompense for mother's care,  
    To touch nor spear nor brand ;  
But hate all deeds of war and strife,  
And live in peace a yeoman's life.

One secret only Bryan kept  
For ever hidden in his breast ;  
It lived and died and with him slept,  
Not even Janet ever guessed,  
Whose hand had struck on Marston plain,  
And left her Bryan 'mid the slain.

# VERSES.



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*"BEHOLD, I STAND AT THE DOOR  
AND KNOCK."*

"Oh, haste thee, and open,  
The evening is late."  
The Master was speaking,  
My heart was the gate.

"At daybreak I saw thee  
Dance gleefully by,  
The splendours of dawning  
Were bright in thine eye.

"I smiled on thy joyaunce,  
So glad and so fair,  
I loved thee and loving  
I bade thee, 'Beware.'

"At noontide I met thee  
In bridal array;  
My bright passion-flower  
I strewed on thy way.

"And pensively kissing  
Thou took it and pressed,  
One moment, My symbol  
Of love to thy breast.



"I loved thee supremely ;  
With tears of delight  
I knelt on thy pathway,  
Hid in sunbeams bright.

"But a summer-red rose  
Blushed bold to thine eye,  
And My poor passion-flower  
Forgotten did lie.

"I heard in the gloaming  
Thy desolate moan ;  
Thou, weary and hopeless,  
Wert weeping alone.

"I whispered, 'Thy sorrow,  
Oh, tell it to Me,  
Thy heart's desolation,  
I'll bear it for thee.

" 'Oh, give Me thy burden,  
And lean on My breast,  
I'll fill thee with joyaunce,  
I'll soothe thee to rest.'

"But bright was the sunset  
As gold on the hill,  
And thy tears, they were dried,  
Thy moan, it was still.

"Oh, haste thee, and open,  
'Tis late, oh, so late ;  
The darkness is falling ;  
Still barred is the gate."

The Master had spoken,  
Yet, loth to depart,  
In silence was standing  
And sorrow of heart.

I was weary of life,  
And fain had been dead,  
Yet I thought on the morrow,  
And shuddered with dread.

I arose with my pain  
Of desolate fears,  
I felt not the darkness  
Nor mist of my tears.

With the numbness of age  
And ache of despair  
In terror I wrestled  
And agonized prayer.

"Lord, Master, receive me,  
Oh, give me Thy rest."  
Wide flew the door open ;  
I sunk on His breast.

And the peace, oh, the peace  
In my every part,  
Within me, around me,  
Was heaven to my heart.

*TEMPLUM VENERIS.*

(CLAUDE.)

OH, for the touch of that deft hand which drew  
This stately splendour on the Baian shore,  
The dreamy landscape and the waters blue  
With azure skies for ever vaulted o'er,  
The wealth of drowsy foliage and the store  
Of shadows cool, beneath tall, slumb'rous trees,  
The sunlit cliffs on distant mountains hoar,  
The clouds above, so light and full of ease,  
And clear air resonant with summer melodies.

Here slowly wends, amid the ivies cool,  
The glad procession, tuneful, laurel-crowned ;  
And two fair suppliants for the sweet control  
Of love half recognized and half disowned,  
On timid feet with doves and fruits are bound  
To pay the tribute Love demands from all,  
Peasant or prince in lofty palace found ;  
Love met them, in a guise ethereal,  
And threw around their breasts his soft yet ruthless  
thrall.

There, on the marble steps, the wreathed faun  
Holds drowsy panthers in his listless thrall ;  
And, bearing wands with vine leaves deckt at dawn,  
The eager suitors mount unto the hall,  
Nor heed the pipes that for their worship call ;

And on the terrace stand the shrine of Love,  
And white-robed priests with praises musical  
As spring-time birds within the neighbouring grove,  
While Venus and her boy bend lovingly above.

Oh, for that ear to hear, that eye to see  
The spirits, moving in the summer air,  
To know that gladness such as theirs can be,  
And sift the sadness from our landscape fair,  
And in all lovely things to have our share ;  
With ear attuned unto a wakeful eye  
To hear the music of the evening star  
And all earth's glad and various minstrelsy ;  
Young lives were always ours, and summer ever by.

*IL TEMPORALE DEL POUSSINO.*

POUSSIN, thy art has filled the summer air  
 With ruthless spirits, such as Claude ne'er drew ;  
 The sweet, compassionate and loving care  
 Of Nature unannoyed he only knew,  
 And on all things a robe of sunlight threw.  
 But thou hast summoned from their restless sleep  
 On seas and arid wastes, a reckless crew  
 Of unseen monsters ; thou hast bid them keep  
 Fast revels as they list, on field and rocky steep.

Some fill the trees with frenzy uncontrolled  
 And impulse passionate for their own ill ;  
 Awhile, a furious carnival they hold,  
 And then exhausted, passionless and still,  
 They sink into a stupor, without thrill,  
 Of shame and self-wrought ruin. Some, more free,  
 Run riot upon mead and stream and hill,  
 Or touch with winged fire, in playful glee,  
 The hoar castel, and laugh the leaping flames to see.

And man is naught amid such awful powers,  
 His own he learns with every blast anew ;  
 And, like a slave, he only fears and cowers  
 To hide in insignificance from view.  
 The steadfast mountains, they alone are true,  
 And bare their bosoms to the threatening skies,  
 Assume defiantly the tempest's hue,  
 And frown upon the storm that round them flies,  
 Till from its lowering wrath, all proudly calm, they  
 rise.

*THE LOST TRAVELLERS.\**

THE day is dark ; with frowns I bear  
The rude, unseasonable air ;  
I shrink, I sigh, " Who would not fly  
To sunny fields and summer sky ? "  
And, glancing on the cheerless noon,  
I mourn for autumn dead too soon.  
Poor waifs of summer wreckage, borne  
On surly winter's crest forlorn ;  
Whence came ye ? from the darkening north ?  
And why so late ye sallied forth ?  
A nameless terror all behind,  
And Death upon the assisting wind.  
Your summer home, perchance it grew  
In sacred shadows that I knew ;  
And ye have seen the scenes that moved  
My boyish fancy till I loved ;  
And ye have heard the sounds that stole  
In music to my waking soul.

Like spirits, free to go and come  
'Twixt heaven and their once earthly home,

The autumn of 1885 was exceptionally stormy and inclement, and many belated house-martins perished. Some were as late as December 3rd, in East Suffolk, and during afternoon of October 27th two were noticed flying about the place. Next morning they were found dead together on the floor beneath a beam in the barn, and my little boy of four years carried them with tears in his eyes to every one about the house to kiss before he consigned them to their grave in his back garden.

Your fairy shadows, did they pass  
And pass last summer o'er the grass,  
Where rests in God all I revered  
In human form or ever feared ?  
Whose pity bred my deepest shame,  
Whose sorrow was my worst of blame ;  
And ye, frail sprites, have hither sped  
To tell how rests the sacred dead.  
Ye have my ruth, my silent tears,  
Faint, wayworn, homeless travellers ;  
The shores ye seek are warm and bright ;  
I fain would follow you in flight.

My little boy, what have we here ?  
Thy hands the tiny wanderers' bier ?  
Thy questioning eye, I see, would speak  
And ask if they again will wake.  
Yes, yes, somewhere—I may not tell,  
In sunny lands, and it is well.  
No, no, thy innocent sweet kiss  
Shall not restore them unto this.  
Go, lay them down, and do not weep ;  
'Tis but a new and deeper sleep,  
A sweeter sleep than e'er they thought  
The longest summer day had brought ;  
It comes to all that creep or fly  
Upon the earth or in the sky ;  
It comes to all—I cannot tell  
Why, whence, or how, but it is well.  
Go, plant thy flowers, and let them have  
Thy favourite primrose on their grave ;  
'Twill bloom again and be more dear  
For blooming there another year ;  
And bloom, perchance, my little boy,  
With something of the sleepers' joy ;

And thou may'st read through its disguise  
The mysteries of Paradise.

Still are ye here? Oh, tempest-tost,  
Faint wanderers, forlorn and lost?  
No, no, not here, frail travellers;  
For ye have slept away your fears.  
And nothing know of past annoy,  
And nothing have but rest and joy.  
Ye now are in a sweeter light  
Than e'er ye dreamed of in your flight.  
Ye will not leave that blissful shore  
To pass the seas for evermore;  
There, ceaseless on the dreaming river,  
The placid sunlight sleeps for ever;  
Nor ever wake the slumb'rous trees  
To wanton in the listless breeze;  
But all is sweetly still and fair,  
Though pleasant murmurs throng the air;  
Melodious murmurs, faintly heard  
When sleepful ears by dreams are stirred;  
And pleasant odours languish round  
In amorous dalliance with the sound,  
Odours as full of joy and rest  
As syrens' song from islands blest;  
And pleasant lights all things endue  
With joy of life for ever new.  
There pleasant too is all endeavour,  
And effortless as thought for ever;  
And ye have but to will and have  
All gladness your full senses crave.  
Oh, happy birds, ye now have ceased  
From toil and care, and ye are blest.  
Oh, happy birds, that sunny shore  
Ye will not leave for evermore.



*LIFE.*

AND thou, O Life, I fain would know  
 In such strange guise, whence camest thou ;  
 Whence camest thou to earth, forlorn,  
 Importunate and beggar-born ?  
 Thou naked, houseless wanderer,  
 From world to world, whence camst thou here ;  
 Frail weakling thou, and bounty-fed  
 By earth in pity of thy need ?  
 Thy shivering form her kindness dressed,  
 As her own child, in all her best ;  
 She gave thee of herself, and thou  
 Didst ever take, nor hadst enow,  
 Though thou didst build a palace fair  
 And dwelt secure and careless there ;  
 For thou didst change the while it grew  
 And long for wonders ever new,  
 Unsated and ungratified  
 By all thy generous nurse supplied,  
 Till thou didst claim, by right divine,  
 Whate'er thou wouldst as only thine ;  
 And then, thou graceless beggar-born,  
 Thou treatedst her with careless scorn,  
 And, like a thief that dreads the light,  
 Thou stol'st away at dead of night,  
 That none might know the way thou went,  
 Or claim of thee fair settlement.  
 They found thy palace tenantless,  
 And, marvelling at its curiousness,

Restored to earth the gifts she gave,  
And named their resting-place a grave.

O Life, whence camest thou to earth ?  
Did some far orb first give thee birth,  
And thou from world to world must climb  
Throughout all range of space and time ?  
Art thou that spirit of the light  
God breathed upon the boundless night,  
Wherein, amid the ceaseless storm,  
Thou shap'dst thyself to thought and form ?  
Then passed away—remembering not  
Thy former self—to be begot  
In higher sphere of sense and thought ;  
And step by step to this was brought.  
And now upon thy heavenward way  
Deignest awhile with me to stay.  
But soon thou wilt relinquish me,  
And on to other worlds wilt flee,  
And other form and thought assume  
In purer light and larger room,  
And glorious grow and lighter tread  
Thy path with ever hastening speed,  
A meteor circling to its sun,  
Or angel hovering near God's throne,  
Till, all thy varied journey trod,  
Thou shalt ascend and dwell with God.  
O Life, when come these things to be,  
Wilt thou forget thy home with me,  
And nothing know of past annoy  
In thy supreme unceasing joy ?

*DEATH.*

AND thou, O Death, whence camest thou ?  
Art thou that mystery of woe,  
That spirit lost from Paradise,  
Or fallen angel all too wise ?  
That thou with Life shouldst consort so,  
And like Life's shadow constant go.  
Is it in pity of our strife  
Thou com'st to free our weary life  
When Life has filled its earthly stage,  
And grown too mighty for its cage ;  
And all too small its tenement  
Is now to give its hopes content ?  
Is it to rend the prison wall,  
And free Life from its dreary thrall,  
To break the chain that binds us down  
To the sepulchral dungeon stone,  
Thou com'st and dost in guise of friend  
So gently to our needs attend,  
And soothe life's parting of its smart,  
Thou deft practitioner of thy art ?  
Or comest thou—thou child of Night,  
Born of God's frown upon the Light,  
A shadow cast athwart our path,  
As sign and token of God's wrath,  
A gathering cloud in sunny skies  
To veil the daylight from our eyes,  
An iceberg moving silently  
Across the misty summer sea,

When speeds the bark in careless state,  
Nor heeds its ever-nearing fate?  
We set the sails, the breezes blow,  
We try to steer, but know not how,  
Well satisfied if on we go;  
Anear we see the gleaming waves,  
And hear them in the icy caves;  
And yet no meaning to our ears  
Their sound, perchance through pity, bears,  
And, all unseen amid the gloom,  
Floats nearer still that shape of doom;  
We feel the chill its presence gives,  
And dull and cheerless grow our lives;  
Nearer and nearer still we float,  
And sigh and touch and then are not.

Who and what art thou? Do I err  
To call thee Life's interpreter,  
And deem thou art in all things wise,  
And watchest us with tearful eyes?  
While we through glorious mazes strain,  
Nor know the goal we strive to gain.  
Thou leader of the blind to light,  
And sweet restorer of their sight,  
Thou art so cognizant of truth,  
No sin of ours can mar thy ruth;  
Sin is not sin, and stain not stain,  
But only frailty and pain,  
The accidents of human life,  
Or scars begot of mortal strife;  
And thou who knowest all our way,  
Our sorrows growing with our stay,  
And dullness of our winter's day,  
Dost come to give our cares release,  
And bid our useless wanderings cease.

*THE TWIN BROTHERS.*

O LIFE, I know not who thou art,  
 And yet of me thou hast a part ;  
 O Death, thou claimest kin with me,  
 And yet I know not who ye be,  
 Save that to Life thou clingest so,  
 As 'lated friend with friend will go.  
 Mysterious Death ; mysterious Life ;  
 Twin brothers born to friendly strife ;  
 I know ye not save by the thread  
 Of scarlet from my mother's bed,  
 A certain gentleness in death,  
 And patient bating of the breath,  
 A certain wilfulness in life,  
 And aptitude for careless strife.  
 Each like a shadow unto each,  
 Or echo of each other's speech ;  
 Ye mingle in each other's motion  
 As glancing sunbeams with the ocean ;  
 I know not when I see ye smiling,  
 Whether 'tis Life's or Death's beguiling ;  
 I know not how or whence ye came,  
 Joint tenants of this throbbing frame ;  
 But ye are here, and ye possess  
 All that of me has blessedness ;  
 Ye passed abreast the portal through,  
 Ye shaped the fabric as it grew ;  
 Ye, hand in hand, its cupboards stored  
 With many a strange and curious hoard,

And side by side ye shared the feast,  
And side by side ye took your rest ;  
And ye will leave whenso ye will,  
As ye have come, for good or ill ;  
And mouldering wall and cornice gray  
Will melt once more into their clay.  
O Death, I know not who thou art,  
And yet I feel thee near my heart ;  
O Life, thou claimest kin with me,  
And yet I know not who ye be.

*TIME.*

OH, pitiless Time, art thou  
 Nothing more than the soulless thing we know ;  
 A ceaseless stream on its silent way  
 From the unknown hills to some unknown bay,  
 That broadens at last in that unknown sea,  
 Where all that has been or shall ever be  
 Finds a dreamless rest in eternity ;  
 While close on thy placid breast there lies  
 A clinging mist that will never rise ?  
 Or hast thou a form to the mind of God,  
 A life of thine own and a freehold abode ?  
 Or art thou a tenant-at-will, and He  
 Will bid thee depart, and thou wilt not be ?  
 Did He mould thee to shape like a potter his clay,  
 And of what did He fashion thy frame, I pray ?  
 Did He carve thy limbs out of soundless space,  
 And carefully chisel thy passionless face ?  
 Did He form each feature of silence, until  
 Thou wast what thou art, inexpressibly still ?  
 Does some tide of life, 'neath that desolate calm,  
 Energize and pulsate through thy viewless form ?  
 Hast thou heart to feel for the sorrows of earth ?  
 Had'st thou tears to weep when she came to the birth ?  
 That her hapless lot thou should'st soothe away,  
 And soften all things with a slow decay,  
 In silence dissolving the heart of our grief,  
 As the rainstream has hollowed its heart from the cliff ;  
 Thy thought is to soften, thy strength to be still,  
 Thou canst empty the heart, but never re-fill.

Like a darksome cavern, unearthly and lone,  
When the tumult of waters is hushed and gone,  
And the stillness of death is on roof and floor,  
And aisle and arcade will resound no more,  
Still, still does the heart, though amerced of its fever,  
In sadness re-echo its sorrows for ever,

Oh, pitiless Time, how I pity thee,  
If thou storest all things, and hast memory ;  
All sorrow and shame our world has known,  
All sights and sounds of the ill that is gone,  
And the terrible waste of the things we prize,  
When the bud or bloom of our effort dies,  
And our immature hope grows wan with blight,  
And the fruit decays in the ripening light.  
Do they come, like dreams, to the overworn breast,  
And break through thy calm, when our sorrows would  
rest ?

Art thou grey with a grief which is not thine own ?  
Art thou old with regret ere thy youth-tide has flown ?  
In a myriad shapes do the spectres rise  
Of Earth's countless ills and her agonies ?  
And thy spirit would fain of its fetters be free ;  
Yet their horrid forms thou must helpless see,  
And silent must list to thy memory.  
Art thou bent by the palsying touch of fear  
Of all that may be in each coming year,  
And fain in thy ruth o'er the morrow wouldst weep,  
And soothe all things to unknowing sleep ?  
But the breeze never sighs on thy dreamful breast,  
And the mist never breaks from its passionless rest,  
To give to our hope or the thought of the wise  
The faintest glimpse of some paradise.  
Thou art ever anear—it is all we know—  
We feel thee beneath us in ceaseless flow,  
As our fathers had felt thee long ages ago ;



They read not thy riddle in earth, sea, or air,  
And gave thee thy anonym "Now" in despair.  
It is all we have, and our straining eye  
Untiringly turns in mute agony  
To the zenith above and its faint, wan sky ;  
While we dream, that is all, that thy tide flows on,  
Like a meteor-stream to its parent sun ;  
A maelström of what ? and thy centre is where ?  
Not the matter of earth, not in regions of air ;  
Thy frictionless stream has its vortex in God :  
And the souls of men are its only load.

*IN MEMORIAM.*

CHARLES GEORGE GORDON.

SPIRIT, bright and fearless,  
Would that we could tell  
Without shame and tearless,  
All thou wert and well ;  
A song was never heard as from our hearts should  
swell.

All the heaven is ringing,  
And the earth beneath  
Tunes herself to singing,  
Though with gasping breath,  
As of benediction to love more strong than death.

Minstrel never had  
Theme for song like thee ;  
Strains, however glad,  
But faint echoes be  
The deep notes hymning thy strong life's melody.

Poet now nor ever  
Penned a sadder thought  
Than thy best endeavour  
Unto stillness brought ;  
Thou hast so nobly done, yet all has come to naught.

Wiser than the sages  
In the heavenly lore ;  
Hero of all ages  
That have gone before,  
Will be hereafter, when we shall be no more.

Interpreter in actions  
Of the world's best thought ;  
Spurner of our factions,  
Though we heeded not,  
Thy faith was not for hire, thy patriotism unbought.

Alone, but not lonely.  
Thou thy path hast trod,  
Striving, ever, only,  
For the right and good,  
And won at last thy goal, thou iron man of God.

Like a lonely beacon  
On a desert shore,  
Breasting though forsaken,  
Winds' and waters' roar,  
Thou didst front the storm, and its rage in silence  
bore.

Like a true-born sailor,  
Whom no perils check,  
Didst thou faint or fail or  
Quit the sinking wreck,  
Or calm and unaffrayed tread still the shuddering  
deck ?

Like a sentry lonely  
At the foremost post,  
Gazing forward only  
On the hostile host,  
While all behind were fleeing ; thou wert doubly lost.

Living, thou wert singing  
This life's sweetest strain  
And all heaven bringing  
To a world in pain  
Through want of faith to see when prophets come  
again.

Still we hear thee singing  
Of the higher life,  
Still thy true notes ringing  
Through our jarring strife  
Thrill us into action, though doubts and fears are rife,

The music of mountains  
In still lutes may grow,  
The melody of fountains  
From fair lips may flow ;  
But when we hear thy song our hearts must overflow.

*THE LOWERED FLAG.*

SHE is outward bound ; she has left the Sound ;  
She is far in the open sea ;  
And the Western gale, it has filled her sail ;  
Was never a bark more free.

The wind was strong, and it drave her along  
Ten days and nights before it ;  
And, gathering black on her silvery track,  
The wrath of heaven fell o'er it.

All day through the wrack of that tempest black  
Like a frightened hind she flew ;  
Nor ever a gleam, ahead or abeam,  
The sun on the wild waves threw.

Nor ever a sound, above or around,  
Save of wind and waters frantic,  
The sea-mew has fled from the storm, in dread  
Of the wrathful mid-Atlantic.

Yet she hurries on through the storm alone ;  
She has laughed at its wrath before ;  
And in glee she leaps down the billowy steeps  
A hundred feet or more.

And the dauntless crew laugh loud as they view  
The white waves vainly chasing ;  
And she seems to spring, like a living thing,  
From a monster's rude embracing.

'Tis the calm they dread, when the winds are dead,  
And the skies are bright and fair,  
And the misery of a glassy sea,  
The sun and his steadfast stare.

For the skipper's form in the writhing storm  
Was calm as a saint's might be ;  
And the leaping spray on the deck did play  
Like children about his knee.

Rough-hewn and rude as the rock that stood  
At the wind-swept foreland's base ;  
The hand of the storm had fashioned his form  
And the skipper's rugged face.

The winds are gone, but the ship moves on  
Like a white and sheeted ghost ;  
And a deep mist fell on the heaving swell,  
Two days from the English coast.

The winds are gone, but the ship moves on  
Two days in a weary dream,  
She rose and fell on the heaving swell,  
Like a weed on the warm Gulf Stream.

She drifted on in the mist alone,  
Nor ever the sea-mew cried ;  
Like a sleeper distraught with a dominant thought  
She obeyed the resistless tide.

Nor ever a sound, above or around,  
Save from the lapping tide ;  
With a fearful oath and a sudden bound,  
The skipper was at her side.

"Now, by my soul, 'tis the Dungeon Shoal,  
Ten miles from the English land ;  
And never a ship has escaped from the grip  
Of its soft but cruel sand.

"She is on the shoal, and, by my soul,  
Like a hand upon her keel,  
I feel its grip on the good old ship,  
The deadly grip I feel.

"I prayed last night for the storm in its might  
To come on the southern wind ;  
And the distant gale, it has touched her sail,  
It is but a league behind."

Then the mist behind was rent by the wind,  
And the storm came struggling through ;  
It tugged and strove with the sails above,  
And the sand with the keel below.

One hour and more the wild wind bore  
The helpless ship before it ;  
Her sails were rent, and the mainmast bent  
Till the crested foam flew o'er it.

From stern to stem, in a furious stream,  
The following waves ran free ;  
But the skipper stood in the raging flood,  
Alone at the helm stood he.

And the gentle hand of the cruel sand,  
Like a vice beneath her lay ;  
The velvet hand of the deadly sand  
Has closed upon its prey.

It draws her down to a depth unknown ;  
No power on earth can move her,  
For the hand of Death is tugging beneath,  
And the ruthless winds above her.

"Yo ho, Yo ho, on the starboard bow  
A good ship stands us by ;  
She lowers a boat, it is now afloat."  
From the cross-trees came the cry.

“Haul down that rag of the good old flag,  
’Tis murder, in such a sea,  
To bid men come to a certain doom,  
And perish as well as we.

“Men and brothers, *they* have mothers,  
Boys like yours and homes and wives ;  
Shall they, comrades, then, those undaunted men,  
Waste for us in vain their lives ? ”

They were rude, rough men, but they answered then  
In a stern, determined tone :  
“ They shall not come to a certain doom,  
We’ll die and we’ll die alone.”

He seized that rag of the dear old flag ;  
The skipper spoke never a word,  
But he tore the sign from the signal line,  
And tossed it overboard.

Ye noble hearts, ye have done your parts  
In a dire extremity ;  
And never more true was skipper or crew  
That sailed on the stormy sea.

The wild waves smote in wrath on the boat ;  
The flashing foam flew o’er her ;  
But her gallant freight seemed a feather’s weight,  
And the love of Christ upbore her.

And strong arms strain, nor strain in vain  
Amid the roaring billows ;  
And rescued men slept sound agen  
That night on English pillows.



*THE DYING NATURALIST.*

I CARE not for splendours that man can achieve,  
The pomp and the pageant of power ;  
Their glitter may dazzle, it does not deceive,  
It cannot console, it will not relieve  
My sadness of heart for an hour.

I heed not the praise and the plaudits of men,  
The honours that fame can bestow ;  
They ravish the heart that is honest, and when  
We dream we are blest as immortals, oh, then  
They satiate, sadden, and go.

Oh, give me the joy of unclouded skies,  
The smiles and the raptures of earth,  
When she wakes from her sleep in a glad surprise,  
And, uplifting her myriad of laughing eyes,  
She bursts into innocent mirth.

Oh, give me the hope of the lengthening day,  
The childhood and youthtide of flowers,  
The hawthorn bud on the drooping spray,  
Ere the bloom is touched with its soft decay,  
And the sombre hue that is ours.

Let me watch the pale primrose unfolding its bloom,  
Let me swoon in the violet's breath ;  
They can lure my heart from its pensive gloom,  
My immature hope from its early tomb,  
And my love from its lingering death.

Let me list till my fancy can hear the sweet strains  
They sing to each other whilst growing ;  
They will soothe me to rest from my desolate pains,  
Till my spirit shall burst from its shadowy chains  
With joy of their song overflowing.

Oh, give me the joy and the sadness of earth,  
The sunlight and shadows I love,  
When the flow'rets come to a timely birth,  
And the summer falls with its sweet young mirth  
From the overfull skies above.

*LOVE.*

Oh, where, in this world of shadows,  
Is Love and its substance met?  
In the heart that has sorrowed in loving,  
And the love that was worthy of it.

Oh, where, in this world of deceit,  
Is Truth and its substance found?  
In the heart that has suffered in loving,  
And in silence has hidden its wound.

Oh, where, in this world of mirage,  
Of Hope is fulfilment born?  
In the heart that was faithful in loving,  
Though the hand by the rose had been torn.

Oh, where, in this world of defeat,  
Is Day without cloud or night?  
In the heart that has lived on its loving,  
And its gladness not hidden from sight.

*LIFE AND DEATH.*

WHAT art thou, Life? A taper's ray  
That shoots athwart the twilight grey,  
A transient gleam, a little glow,  
Kindled, we know not where or how?

What art thou, Death? The common dark  
That closes round a fading spark,  
Claiming his own, for all are his,  
Where all things go, yet nothing is?

What art thou, Life? A tremor felt  
Within a tiny lump of clay,  
A laugh, a sigh, a sense of guilt,  
And we and it are lost for aye?

What art thou, Death? A stillness deep  
To which all earthly movement tends,  
Atomic rest, a cosmic sleep,  
Where all in chilly darkness ends?

What art thou, Life? The instinct rude  
That thrills each elemental cell  
To labour for the common good,  
And build a form wherein there dwell  
A myriad myriad living things,  
All welded to a common whole,  
A polity, wherein the kings  
Are passion, lust, sense, conscience, soul?

What art thou, Death? A subtle draught  
That lulls this instinct into rest,  
Makes duty but a thing of naught,  
And commonweal a theme for jest?  
Its citizens rebellious grow,  
The lean wax fat, the little great,  
And selfish strife brings overthrow  
And dissolution of the State.

Whence art thou, Life? Is thy far home  
Some nebula of subtlest force,  
Whither no straining glance may come,  
Or coming, find naught in its course?  
A vaporous cloud in distant skies,  
So fine, so tenuous, so light,  
Were all inorbed, in weight and size,  
An atom would surpass it quite.  
As men that traverse unknown seas,  
And find each night new skies above,  
Note nothing but the nearer breeze,  
And if on stated course they move;  
And of ten thousand things that creep  
Or dart around, they nothing know;  
Yet bear with them across the deep  
Strange creatures on the keel below.

So planets, suns, and systems vast  
Amid thy instinct æther float,  
And bear away, when they have passed,  
The thing called Life, as it were naught.

Or, art thou, Life, more heavenly still?  
God's thought, instinct and infinite,  
In infinite division, till  
It may with dust of earth unite?

And energize and shape and bring  
The mobile elements of earth  
To unseen ends, through suffering,  
And long laborious pangs of birth?

Till thou more stately homes and fair  
Hereafter shalt devise and build,  
And dwell in them, without a care,  
Or aught for joy thou hast not willed,

Save memories of our sad lot,  
Imperfect longings and blind strife,  
Dim memories, so far forgot,  
As dreams they'll be of other life.

So well thou'lt build ; in earth and sky  
The tyrants we with fear obey  
Shall be quick ministers of joy  
And willing subjects to thy sway ;

And thou, in thy ascent the same  
Old Life, bequeathed from sire to son ;  
New hands may bear the torch, the flame  
Is passed for aye unchanging on.

Where art thou, Death? Is thy vast home,  
The void that lies all life around?  
The chill to which all warmth must come,  
The stillness of all act and sound?

Or art thou, Death, more glorious thought,  
The coming home of exile bands,  
That long at various toil have wrought  
With weeping eyes in alien lands?

With listless head and careless mien

We land upon the unknown shore ;

Behind us fades the glorious scene,

The wiles that we knew of yore.

We dance upon the meadows near ;

We sing the simple songs we love ;

Then rest, as slaves, without a fear.

Our highest thoughts beyond, above,

Inland, toward the flashing streams

On far-off cliffs and mountains high,

That rise, as in golden dreams,

All sunlit, kiss the clearer sky.

And there, deep green, from base to crest,

Of tired gloom, shot through and through

With shafts of sunlight, tempt our quest

For wonders we shall never view.

We climb and climb and onward press

Through summer sunshine, winter rain,

Not doubting of a full success,

After long toil and varied pain.

We stand upon the summit now,

And clutch the fulness of delight,

With gasping breath and heated brow

And hands sore wounded in the fight.

But all we feel is weariness,

And all we see, the path beneath ;

Is this the prize of our success,

And all we long for, quiet death ?

A darker land before us falls  
In easy slopes unto the sea ;  
A stronger voice beneath us calls ;  
"Descend, and hasten unto me."

We see upon the waters dark  
The falling sails, a dark blue speck ;  
We greet the signal to embark,  
And, fainting, swoon upon the deck.

The anchor's up ; heaven's breezes blow  
The weary exiles to their home ;  
We know not where, we care not how,  
So only to our land we come.



*OUR JOHNNIE.*

OH, whaw is like oor Johnnie?  
Oh, whaw's a faace sae bonnie?  
There is naan like, there is naan sike,  
In awl the toon as Johnnie.

Oh, Johnnie's broo is high and braade,  
An' Johnnie's hair is wheyt,  
An' Johnnie's e'e more sweetly beams  
Than onny bullace breyt.

An' Johnnie's tongue speeaks fair and trew,  
An' Johnnie tells na lee,  
An' Johnnie's heart's sa warm an' good,  
There's naan sa good as he.

Oh, whaw's a tongue like Johnnie's?  
Oh, whaw's a heart sa bonnie?  
There is na heart, there is na tongue  
In all the toon like Johnnie's.

An' Johnnie's land is awl his awn,  
It ligs baith nigh an' dry;  
There's eighty yakker an' a reead  
An' barn an' ford yird by.

Oh, whaw is like oor Johnnie?  
Oh, whaw's a farm sa bonnie?  
There is na farm, there is na barn  
In awl the toon like Johnnie's.

An' Johnnie hez na rent to pay ;  
He gies it hauf to t' poor,  
There's nivver a lock aboot the plaace,  
Nor a bowt ahint the doore.

Oh, whaw is like oor Johnnie ?  
Oh, whaw's a rent sa bonnie ?  
There is na rent, there's naan sa free  
In awl the toon as Johnnie.

An' t' young Squire says that Johnnie's heart  
Is maade o' Cowthrup yak,\*  
Bud Johnnie's heart, when his luvv deed,  
Gav mony a bund and crack.

Oh, whaw's a heart like Johnnie's ?  
Oh, whaw'd a luvv sa bonnie ?  
There was na luvv, there is na heart  
In all the toon like Johnnie's.

An' t' parson says that Johnnie's fooaks  
Lig law on Marston Moor,  
Wheer Rupert fowt, bud Crummle won,  
An' King Charlie paid the score.

An' when they said that Boney'd come,  
He sell'd his coos an' hosses,  
He left his land, an' tramped to Yorrk,  
And joined King George's fosses.

An' fower lang yeeres, i' sun an' caud,  
He fowt like onny ranker ;  
T' girt Duke shakt him biv' iz hand  
At Jozey † an' Salmanca.

\* The giant Cowthorpe oak.

† Badajoz.

Oh, whaw's a heart like Johnnie's ?  
Oh, whaw could fight sa bonnie ?  
There is na heart, there's naan could fight  
In awl the toon like Johnnie.

An' fooaks awl know that Johnnie's airm  
Is strang because its trew ;  
Oh, wad sike strent war freely lent  
To men like me an' you.

*ADVICE.*

Gan yam, gan yam, ma bonnie lass,  
'Thoo mawn't be oot alaane ;  
There's mony a man 'll deea tha wrang,  
They've nowt bud hearts o' staane.

Gan yam, gan yam, ma bonnie lass,  
Ah'l see tha doon to 't dike ;  
There's waästril Tom, Will Louse-i'-t-heft \*  
An' hauf a scoor o' sike.

Gan yam, gan yam, ma bonnie lass,  
Wharl thoo's an honest naame ;  
They've bonnie wods an' bonnie deeds,  
An' then there's nowt bud shaame.

Gan yam, gan yam, ma bonnie lass,  
Thoo mawnt come here an' stot ; †  
Thee faather 'd lowp fra oot his graave  
If owt sud deea tha hot. ‡

Ah will gan yam, at yance, Ah will,  
Thoo's better nor a brudder ;  
There's naan sall saay, Ah yance gat wrang ;  
Ah'l bide at yam wi' mudder.

\* Loose in the haft—a worthless, unreliable fellow.

† Walk jauntily.

‡ Hurt.

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*THE AGNOSTIC.*

O HEAVEN, if Heaven there be,  
A quiet spot, a place  
Not lost in space,  
As Time is in Eternity ;  
Some solid ground  
That is, and may be found  
By feet that thitherward are bound,  
And tread in grief or mirth  
The ever-yielding earth  
With hopes of higher things,  
And prayers for angels' wings,  
To fly away and rest,  
And be for ever blest ;  
Nor hear the echoes follow  
Each footstep dread and hollow,  
Nor feel the rock and sand  
Sink from me as I stand,  
And thrill me with despair  
That all things shadows are.  
Save Sorrow  
And the fears we borrow  
From the dread and dark to-morrow.  
Oh to be sure and safe  
In knowing only half  
Of what before us lies,  
Or see some sign  
Of things that are, not dreamed, divine,  
In pity thrown us by the Power benign ;

Some fruit to gladden our sad eyes  
    With no surprise  
    Of monstrous shape or size,  
But suited to our hopes and fears,  
And ripened by our prayers and tears,  
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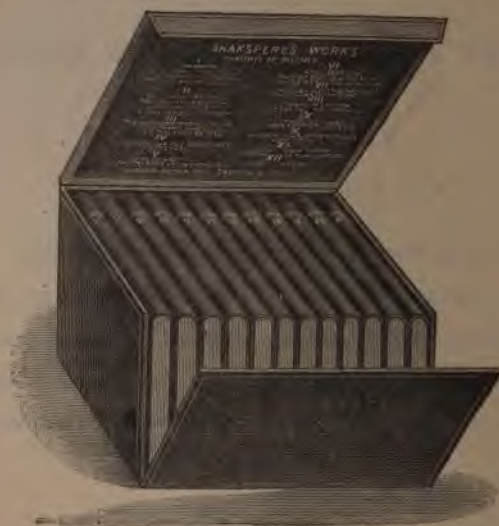
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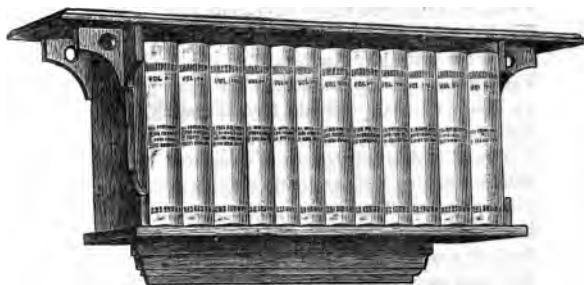
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*Salar.*                      My wind, cooling my broth,  
Would blow me to an ague, when I thought  
What harm a wind too great might do at sea.  
I should not see the sandy hour-glass run  
But I should think of shallows and of flats,  
And see my wealthy Andrew, dock'd in sand,  
Vailing her high-top lower than her ribs  
To kiss her burial. Should I go to church  
And see the holy edifice of stone,  
And not bethink me straight of dangerous rocks,  
Which touching but my gentle vessel's side,  
Would scatter all her spices on the stream,  
Enrobe the roaring waters with my silks,  
And, in a word, but even now worth this,  
And now worth nothing? Shall I have the thought  
To think on this, and shall I lack the thought  
That such a thing bechanc'd would make me sad?  
But tell not me: I know Antonio  
Is sad to think upon his merchandise.

*Ant.* Believe me, no: I thank my fortune for it,  
My ventures are not in one bottom trusted,  
Nor to one place; nor is my whole estate  
Upon the fortune of this present year:  
Therefore my merchandise makes me not sad.

*Salar.* Why, then you are in love.

*Ant.*                      Fie, fie!

*Salar.* Not in love neither? Then let us say you  
are sad,

Because you are not merry; and 'twere as easy  
For you to laugh, and leap, and say you are merry,  
Because you are not sad. Now, by two-headed

Janus,  
Nature hath fram'd strange fellows in her time:  
Some that will evermore peep through their eyes  
And laugh like parrots at a bag-piper;  
And other of such vinegar aspect





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